

UNIVERSAL  
LIBRARY



139 476

UNIVERSAL  
LIBRARY











**200,000,000 SLAVS NEED  
A NEW ALPHABET**



200,000,000 SLAVS NEED  
A NEW ALPHABET

*By*

S. J. BLOCH PUBLISHING CO.  
DETROIT, MICHIGAN

Copyright 1944 by the  
S. J. BLOCH PUBLISHING CO.  
908-9 Guaranty Building  
Detroit 26, Michigan  
All rights reserved

Chapter	Page
I. Modern Slav Nations and their great problems.....	5
II. Some historical and evolutionary considerations.. ....	20
III. General facts about alphabets .... .	44
IV. The proposed alphabet... ..	70
V. Special comments.....	95

## N O T E

*The original manuscript for this book was completed in 1940. In view of the length and nature of the period that elapsed between the writing and the printing of the book, many changes took place in the political and geographical situations in Europe — and many more changes, no doubt, will occur in the near future.*

*It was decided not to try to keep pace with these changes, but to leave the text stand as of the period when the Nazi invasions of Slav territories were at their maximum, so that the statements made in this book about boundaries of Slav states may serve as a poignant reminder of what actually did happen (and could happen again with even more terrible results) when Slav nations do not co-operate.*

## CHAPTER I

### MODERN SLAV NATIONS AND THEIR GREAT PROBLEM

Any one who has followed developments in Eastern and Central Europe since the World War I, must necessarily have been impressed by the lack of organization and cooperation among the Slav nations in their foreign affairs, and by the evidence of lack of consolidation within each one of the countries or regions inhabited by the Slav people. This is especially surprising and significant, in view of the fact that the Slav regions, namely: Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, the Czecho-Slovak territory, Polish territory, and the Russian Soviet Union, are chiefly inhabited by a very similar or homogenous group of people, the Slavs, speaking a group of very similar languages and dialects.

Furthermore, it is also evident that the conspicuous failures of the leaders of these people to achieve reasonably permanent and satisfactory results, politically, are only one phase of an undesirable situation, a phase in which we shall not, as a matter of fact, take very much interest in this discussion. An even more harmful feature of the failures on the part of these Slav people to profit by their homogeneity, is the lack of a proper degree of interaction and consolidation of their cultures, their commerce, their industries, their literatures, and kindred matters. In these modern times, when we like to think of distances as being "annihilated" by modern transportation and communication facilities, and of various regions of the world as being brought steadily closer and closer together, it is the Slavs, by virtue of their similarities and



their great total population, who should be deriving the greatest benefits from these modern conditions; and it is the Slavs, who should, in turn, derive therefrom the greatest incentives to further progress.

In the following discussion, we shall delve into the background of misguided narrow nationalism, dissimilar alphabets, and divergent spellings, to see what role these matters have played in causing or facilitating the subdivision and estrangement of these homogeneous peoples, and to find what can be done to correct such tendencies.

As a brief review of the position of the Slav people in respect to other people in Europe, it should be stated that they comprise one of the very large subdivisions of the Aryan or Indo-European branches of white people; the other chief divisions being the Anglo-Saxon (English, German, etc.), and the Latin (French, Spanish, etc.). The Slav languages differ somewhat more from the Latin and Anglo-Saxon than these differ from each other; and the most closely related of the other Aryans to the Slavs are the comparatively small Baltic division in the Baltic seacoast regions (the Letvians and the Lithuanians).

The Czechoslovak Republic, Poland, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria, formerly independent political units of Slavs, have more or less ceased to exist as independent states, and their territories are all within the "Axis" occupied zones at the time this is being written. A large portion of Soviet Russia, the only remaining truly independent Slav State, has also been invaded and occupied. In the present turmoil in Europe boundaries as established at present mean very little, however, because everything depends upon the outcome of the present struggle, after which there will no doubt be many changes and revisions.

However, regardless of what changes may take place on a temporary, or a more or less permanent political basis, it will always be appropriate to consider the Slavs as being naturally divided into the following groups from a combined historical, geographical, linguistic, racial, and economic viewpoint: The Russian or Eastern group; the Polish or North Central European

group; the Czechoslovak, or Middle Central European group; and the South Central European group, consisting of the two Slav states or areas in the Balkan peninsula—Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. Some of the political leaders of the latter two states have considered the possibility of a federated union of these two states, in which there would be many advantages for the Southern Slav people. However, before such a thing could be accomplished, there is no doubt it would be necessary to put into effect the standardized alphabet discussed in the following chapters, so as to enable the necessary degree of consolidation to take place, in these areas, among the Slav peoples involved. Some additional comment about proposed confederations for Central Europe will also be made in the last chapter of this discussion.

The total number of Slavs in Europe is approximately 200,000,000, and they live in the countries and regions that have been mentioned here, and also in certain districts within neighboring non-Slav states. About 60,000,000 Slavs live within the Central European zone containing all of the Slav states and regions exclusive of the Russian Soviet Union. About 140,000,000 Slavs live within the latter country.

The Slav languages (Russian, Polish, Czech, Serbian, and others) have not become as divergent from each other as have the Anglo-Saxon and Latin types. The great differences between English and German, or French and Spanish, do not exist between Slav languages or dialects. Any one who possesses a good knowledge of one of these Slav languages can learn to read and to make himself understood in any one of the others in a few weeks. Every important modification that the Slav languages have undergone in the past, generally, can be recognized in each one of them, except for the comparatively recent changes of the Bulgarian language to an analytical language, using auxiliary words (prepositions) in place of case endings. So far, this has not been duplicated in the other languages of the Slav group; nevertheless, the Bulgarian vocabulary remains very similar to those of its sister languages.

The languages of the Anglo-Saxon group have, on the other

hand, grown to be very different from each other. English especially, has digressed so far from the others that now it could be considered practically as a distinctly separate language. In this connection, when one considers that the British Empire does not contain more than approximately 70,000,000 white English speaking people in it, the size and importance of the very homogenous Slav group of Europeans becomes evident. Even if we were to combine the entire Aryan population of the United States of America (excluding the Negroes, Jews, and some small groups) with the foregoing group of English speakers (making a total of about 190,000,000, or less), we would not have as large nor as homogenous a group, racially, as is that of the Slavs. Neither does there exist any other Aryan group of people that approaches the Slavs in total population and in homogeneity of race. Furthermore, the birth rate in Slav countries runs very high as compared to other Europeans and Americans, so that leadership of the Slavs, from this viewpoint, will no doubt continue to increase for quite a long time.

From a linguistic viewpoint, Slav people are usually divided into three major divisions, namely: Eastern, Western and Southern. The Eastern division contains the Russians, and they may be sub-divided into: the White Russians (about 10,000,000) living in the Soviet Union territory in the Minsk area; the Little Russians (about 40,000,000) in the Soviet Union; and the Great Russians, who are the largest racial and linguistic group in Russia.

The Little Russians, often called Ukrainians, live along the Black Sea coast in Russia; and also in Bessarabia, formerly a part of Rumania; and in Galicia, formerly a part of Southern Poland. In addition, among Little Russians are included several million Ruthenians in Southern Poland (Galicia), whose dialect differs from the strictly Ukrainian dialects; and about a half-million Russianians (Carpatho-Ukrainians) in what was formerly the easternmost district of Czechoslovakia (Rusinia), who also speak a different dialect.

The foregoing "Ruthenians" of Galicia are descendants of Little Russians who settled in eastern Galician areas a long time

ago. As early as the 11th century A.D. there existed an independent principality, populated by these Ruthenians, which was known as "Halicz". These early settlers came because they had become dissatisfied with a corrupt government at Kiev; whereas, later immigrants from the East came for religious reasons. The eastern parts of the Galician region, at a later period, formed a part of Old Poland. After the partitions of Poland they became a part of Austria-Hungary; and after the Versailles Treaty they became a part of the recent Polish State. The foregoing "Ukrainians" of this same region are more recent immigrants from the Ukraine, who have, in general, settled in different areas of this territory. The dialects of these two groups (Ruthenian and Ukrainian) differ because they have been separated from the main body of Little Russians for different periods of time. The Rusinians of former Czechoslovakia were also early immigrants, and are often called Ruthenians. The word "Ruthene" means Russian.

The Great Russians, whose original home, or the area where their earliest recorded historical events took place, lies in the forest area between the cities of Novgorod, Moscow, and Kiev, have spread throughout Russia and Siberia, as well as throughout all of the regions in which the other branches of Russians, that have been mentioned here, live.

The principal Western Slavs are the Poles (about 22,000,000, or more), the Czechs (about 8,000,000), and Slovaks (about 2,500,000). The latter two groups are usually known as the Czechoslovaks, or just simply as Czechs; and the general term "Czechoslovak" is often applied to their languages, which are nearly alike. These people were the principle inhabitants of the former Czechslovak Republic, the principal states in which were: Bohemia, Moravia and Slovakia.

In addition to the foregoing, among the Western Slavs should be included the Kashubes, a nation variously estimated to have from 125,000 to 250,000 people living in the former Polish "Corridor" area, and in German districts near this area; and the Sorbs (or Wends) living within Germany between the city of

Berlin and the Czech state of Bohemia. The number of Sorbs is also variously estimated to be from 125,000 to 250,000, and they live in two districts—one containing the High Sorbs, located near the north boundary of Bohemia; and the other, the so-called "Spreevald" area, which is farther to the north, containing the Low Sorbs. These Sorbs are merely a small remnant of what once was a great Slav nation, which has been almost entirely absorbed by Prussian Germans. In this connection, it is of interest to quote the following from an English book, "Odd Bits of History," Chapter V, by Henry W. Wolff: "The entire North German population from the Elbe (river) eastward and north of the Bavarian and Bohemian mountains is, in descent, far more Wendish than German. Wendish names, Wendish customs, Wendish fragments of speech, bits of Wendish institutions, survive everywhere to tell of Slav occupation."

"Napoleon's famous Saxon Dragoons were Wends almost to a man."

Although the foregoing may be somewhat exaggerated, one may add the significant fact that the cities of Berlin and Vienna were originally German trading outposts, within Slav territory, about which the German States, Prussia and Austria, respectively, later developed. It is evident from this that most Germans in the eastern parts of Germany probably have much more Slav blood in them than they realize.

In this same connection it is probably appropriate to mention the so-called "Sudeten" Germans living within the Czech state of Bohemia. From the earliest known history about this Slavic state down to the present time, there has been a tendency for the natural boundaries for this region, consisting of mountain ranges and the Bohemian-Moravian Hills, to coincide almost exactly with the political boundary. The state of Bohemia has, in fact, been one of the most stable states, in respect to its boundaries, in Europe; and, except for very minor modifications, its boundaries have remained essentially the same up to the Munich Partition in 1938. The Germans living within the outer rim regions of the state were settlers or immigrants who were actually invited, by

some of the old Czech rulers, to come and settle in the state. However, there never was a political or administrative district known as "Sudeten". This term was simply borrowed from the mountain range along the northeast boundary (Sudetes) and the Nazi propaganda was carried on about this matter in such a way as to deceive many people into believing that the "Sudeten District" was taken from Germany by the Czechs at the conclusion of World War I. In this the Nazi propaganda experts were surprisingly successful.

The Southern Slavs consist of the Slav populations of Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, and some adjacent districts. Yugoslavia is inhabited by the Slovene and the Serbo-Croat nations. The Slovenes, numbering about 1,500,000, live in the western end of the country, and in some districts within Italy and Austria. Their language is similar to the Serbo-Croat. The Serbo-Croat language, spoken by over 12,000,000, can be divided into the kaj, ča, and što dialects, these being the words for "what" in these dialects. The kaj dialect is spoken near the Slovene area, and is very similar to Slovene. The ča dialect is spoken on some islands, and in some Adriatic coast regions. The što dialect is spoken over the main portion of the country. This dialect could be subdivided into three sub-dialects, namely: the e, je, and i sub-dialects. The i sub-dialect (i=English ee) is spoken in a small area in North Dalmatia. The e and je sub-dialects are spoken in general by the Serbs in the east and south, and by the Croats in the west and north, respectively. Thus, it is seen, the difference between Serb and Croat is only a sub-dialect difference, and the chief difference between these sub-dialects is that the Croats use a Latin type of alphabet, like the English, whereas, the Serbs use the Cyrillic alphabet, similar to that used by the Russians. Aside from the different orthography, the Serb and Croat tongues are almost identical. (Sometimes the same text is published in both sets of characters.) Included among Serbo-Croats are such special groups as the Montenegrins, Morlaks, and Uskoks.

The Bulgarian language is also spoken in many dialects, and by over 6,000,000, in Bulgaria and in some adjacent districts.

The dialects could be divided into two principal groups, the Eastern group along the east coast of the country, and the Western group which includes the Sophia area. Within these are smaller groups of dialects, such as the Northern Macedonian and transitional dialects, along the old Serbian border in the northwest, and some additional groups of Macedonian dialects in the southwest. The southernmost of the latter, in the Castoria and Salonika areas, are said to have retained some specific identifying features, which supposedly link them directly with the Old Bulgarian.

The foregoing populations of Slav people do not check with the total populations of the countries mentioned because of the overlapping of Slav populations, and the presence of non-Slav minorities. For example, Poland, prior to its invasion, was a country of over 35,000,000; and had, besides several millions each of Ukrainians, Ruthenians, and White Russians, also, some Germans and a Jewish population of about 3,500,000. On the other hand, about 1,500,000 Poles were left within Germany when the boundaries of the Polish State were established at Versailles.

The Russian Soviet Union territories have a total population of about 193,000,000, the non-Slav minorities amounting to a total of over 50,000,000. This latter total includes several million Jews, and a very large variety of small nations or tribes of natives. In fact, the Soviet Union is said to have a total of 169 ethnic groups, of whom 36 are Indo-European (*Brittanica*), which figures do not include groups that were joined to the Soviet Union by treaties made a short time before the German invasion of Russia. These treaties affected the Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian, and portions of Roumanian, Polish and Finnish regions. As the non-Slav minorities in Russia and the other Slav countries also make considerable use of Slav languages, a total of over 250,000,000 people are directly involved in the matters discussed in the following chapters. This figure does not include people of Slav origin who are living in other parts of the world.

The rather complex situation, in regard to dialects and sub-dialects, given in considerable detail for Yugoslavia, is rather typical of conditions in Europe in general. Wherever a literary

language did not become thoroughly standardized, and its use spread over a large area at an early age, the tendency has been to develop a large variety of dialects and sub-dialects. Every section of the country, every "neck of the woods," seems to tend to develop a peculiar dialect of its own, especially in the regions where a standardized literary language has not as yet been adopted. A printed language tends to be more stable and to hold down the multiplication of dialects. In modern times, no doubt the radio will tend to add to the effect of the written languages to keep dialects from developing too profusely and too rapidly; provided, however, that the radio will be used freely over large areas.

The foregoing does not mean that it is objectionable for languages to continue their evolution; but it is objectionable for a large number of very similar dialects and languages to develop into written literary tongues, because that often tends to result in narrow nationalism, which subdivides people who should be united. In the United States of America, conditions have been such that very distinct dialects do not tend to develop very far, although slight symptoms of such tendencies can be noted. An interesting case in respect to the evolution of words, that should be mentioned in this connection, is the development of the name "Muskellunge," which is the name of a large American species of fish of the Pike family. Probably starting with the word "Maskinonge," which is the Algonquin for a "Great Pike," the name of this fish has varied as follows in the various dialects in the Great Lakes region: Maskallonge, Maskalonge, Mascalonge, Masquenonge, Muscalunga, Muscalinga, Muskkalone, etc. American writers have standardized the word "Muskellunge," eliminating the other variations in spellings and pronunciations. In Europe, when a group of such words for one thing originates, the writers in various closely related languages and dialects seem to feel obligated, by loyalty to their dialect, to perpetuate the various words, which is one reason why a merging of closely related languages and dialects into one language, often does not take place as readily as ought to be the case.



For an example of an extremely thorough case of analyzing a language into dialects and sub-dialects, one may refer to a German book, "Geschichte der Pomoranischen (Kaschubischen) Sprache," by Friedrich Lorentz. This book, concerned with the Kashube or Pomeranian dialects, divides them into two main groups: the North Pomeranian and the South Pomeranian. Then the author proceeds to subdivide each group, and to re-subdivide, until he has a total of 76 subdialects! Of course, the differences between some of these are slight, and each sub-dialect can be spoken by only a small number of people, since the total population of Kashubes is only from 125,000 to 250,000, per various estimates. Nevertheless, this shows that languages tend to subdivide into many dialects, even when spoken by a small number of people. The westernmost of these Pomeranian dialects (Slovinzisch) are considered to be rather closely related to the extinct Polab language.

When the State of Slovakia was created as a part of Czechoslovakia, after the World War I, there were twelve or thirteen Slovak dialects, which were candidates for being adopted as the official "Slovak". All other Slav nations mentioned here speak various dialects. There have been, and still are, Czech dialects which differ slightly from the literary Czech. Likewise, there are Polish dialects which differ from the literary Polish. The Ukrainians do not all speak the same dialect, and Great Russian is also spoken in a number of different dialects. There is a group of Northern Russian or the "o" dialects, spoken in the regions north of Moscow; and there is a group of Southern Russian, or the "a" dialects, spoken in the regions south of Moscow, which agree in some respects with the nearby Ukrainian dialects. The Moscow dialect happens to be in between these two groups; and, although it was spoken by a small minority of Russians, it came to be accepted as the State and literary language of Russia.

Usually the dialects that are spoken in the area adjacent to a region where a more or less different language is spoken, are influenced by that language; and, consequently, such dialects may be thought of as bridging over the gap between the two large

language groups. High Sorb is more like Czech than Low Sorb is, since it is spoken in a district which is closer to Bohemia. The Sorb language, as a whole, is considered to be somewhat in between the Czech and Polish. The Slovak language can be considered as being closer to Polish than Czech is, and Czechoslovak, as a whole, can be considered as bridging the gap to the Southern Slav languages. Similar gradations exist in connection with all of the other Slav languages and dialects.

Usually the language that came to be adopted as the literary or written language, in any large country, was the language developed from the dialect spoken about the Capitol or principal city of the nation. The use of such a dialect expanded at the expense of various other dialects spoken in the more outlying parts. Modern literary Czech is from a dialect spoken around Prague; modern literary Russian is from a dialect spoken in Moscow; and it happened about the same way in connection with most of the modern European languages.

This leads us to one rather important idea, which it would be well for Slavs especially to bear in mind in connection with the question of loyalty, or fanatical patriotism, to some certain language or dialect that is often almost the same as another one. If one were to try to determine just what language or dialect should have been his, on the basis of a normal handing down of the tongue from generation to generation, he must conclude that such a determination is really impossible due to the many outside influences which enter into the matter.

None of us speak the language we would be speaking, for example, if there were no printed literary language, for the literary tongue influenced everyone's language; and was in turn, also, considerably influenced by local dialects, as well as by entirely foreign languages.

Furthermore, such developments as have taken place in literary languages are, as a rule, very desirable; and we may conclude, therefore, that we generally speak a better language than we would be speaking if the development of some dialects, at the expense of others, had never taken place. Consequently, does it

not appear that further development and consolidation of similar languages, leading to a gradual reduction in the number of similar tongues, is equally as desirable now as it was formerly? The mere fact that books in some dialect came to be printed; and that, thereby, there resulted a literature (which by a different course of events might have been abandoned long ago, or never developed) is not always sufficient reason in itself for feeling that such a tongue should be perpetuated indefinitely.

Slav groups, especially some of those that have in recent times become more or less antagonistic, such as Serbs and Croats, or Czechs and Slovaks, are too prone to consider themselves, and their particular version of a Slav language, as definitely finished products of evolution, having a static or permanent differentiation from the other closely related Slav groups. The real truth, of course, is that all are undergoing continuous evolution; and, eventually, all will change more than what their present differences amount to. Therefore, those differences should not be taken too seriously.

Unfortunately, the Slav people are overloaded with an unnecessarily great variety of languages and dialects, all very similar to each other; and it would be well for Slav nations to have some suitable plans for properly disposing of these situations, preferably by gradual and "painless" methods, one of which will be explained in detail later on in this discussion.

The foregoing does not mean that forceful suppression or subjugation of minority districts by Slav states is being advocated here, and it certainly does not mean that nationalization of Slav minorities by non-Slav countries should be advocated or tolerated. The Slavs have plenty of good languages and cultures of their own, and their future generations are rightfully entitled to come into their birthright of a Slavonic culture of one kind or another. To have satisfactory plans for consolidation of their cultures, and to solve the present difficulties resulting from an excessive variety of tongues, is the principal problem which confronts the Slav nations of today.

Before we can discuss means for bringing about the fore-

going, it is necessary that we complete this review of Slavs, their languages, and the alphabets they use, and this will be done in somewhat greater detail in the two chapters that follow.

The Slav people were the last large group of Aryans to migrate into Europe from some regions about the Caspian Sea, or probably from some regions north of the Caspian Sea area. Before them came the Greeks, Latins, Celts (Irish, Scotch, etc.), and Anglo-Saxons or Teutons. The main Slav migrations appear to have taken place, approximately, from the first to the fifth centuries, A.D.

It seems that one of these tribes of Slavs, the Sorbs, were closely related to the Serbians, as their names indicate, but the Sorbs migrated to a place north of the Czechs; and were, thereby, permanently separated from the Serbs. These Sorbs, also called Wends or Lusatians, were absorbed in large numbers by Germanic tribes, as already mentioned, so that now only the two small districts in Germany which they inhabit are left of their nation and country. The dialects of the Sorbs are said to have changed less in the centuries since they settled in the regions they now occupy than other Slav tongues have changed, especially in regard to grammar, and for that reason their language is of considerable interest to students of Old Slav languages. Nevertheless, they have been influenced by their proximity to the Czechs and Poles for many centuries, and they are now generally considered as belonging to the Western Slav division.

In addition to small remnants of the once large Slav nations (Sorbs and Kushubes), there are also records of Slav people who are now extinct. For example, the Polabs were a Slav nation living along the banks of the Elbe river but they are now extinct because they were completely absorbed by Germanic tribes.

The Bulgarians, originally a non-Slav race, also migrated into Europe from Asia along with or following the Slavs. After making a history of some duration in eastern and southern Russia, a part of this tribe came westward to the region now known as Bulgaria. They gave this region their name, and they conquered and absorbed (or were absorbed by) Slav tribes larger than their own.

A peculiar result of this was that the Bulgarians adopted the language of the Slav tribes, so that now there is practically no trace of their original tongue in present Bulgarian. Thus they became members of the Southern Division of Slavs. The Bulgars who remained in their kingdom in the Volga area (Bolgary) became a part of the large empire of the Kipchaks during the middle ages. Their modern descendants are said to be the Tartars of the Kazan region of Eastern Russia.

The foregoing divisions and subdivisions of Slav people are not to be considered perfect from either a linguistic or from a racial viewpoint; however, they seem to be more satisfactory in general than any other classification that could be made. The following outline summarizes the situation in a general way, particularly from the linguistic viewpoint:

I Eastern Slavs (the Russians in a general sense of the term)

1. Great Russians (commonly known as Russians)
2. White Russians
3. Little Russians
  - a. Ukrainians (the Little Russians of Ukrainia, and some adjacent districts)
  - b. Ruthenians (also known as Galicians)
  - c. Russinians (also known as Carpatho-Ukrainians, or Sub-Carpathian Ruthenians)

II Western Slavs

1. Poles
2. Czechs (also known as Bohemians } also known  
and Moravians) } as Czecho-
3. Slovaks } slovaks
4. Kashubes (also known as Pomeranians) including Slavs, or Slavonic districts and dialects, known as: Slovinci (Slovinzisch), Kabatki, Saborn (Saborisch), etc.

5. Sorbs (also known as Wends or Lusatians)
  - a. High Sorbs
  - b. Low Sorbs

### III Southern Slavs

1. Bulgarians
2. Slovenes
3. Serbo-Croats (also known as Yugoslavs)
  - a. Croatians (includes Slavs known as Dalmatians, Bosnians, etc.)
  - b. Serbians

## CHAPTER II

### SOME HISTORICAL AND EVOLUTIONARY CONSIDERATIONS

During the 9th century, at which time all of the Slav nations, as known in modern times, were definitely located in their present home areas, the use of an alphabet for writing was introduced to them for the first time. The ruler of Moravia of that time, requested the Greek Catholic authorities at Constantinople to send missionaries to Moravia to introduce the Christian religion. The missionaries sent were Cyril and Methodius, who came from the Salonika area, and who, therefore, spoke a Southern Macedonian Bulgarian dialect. They wrote the church services in this dialect; and gradually, starting from Moravia, the use of their language, and the alphabetic system for it, which these missionaries developed, based on Greek and using some additional characters (the exact origin of which is not known), came to be adopted for use in the Greek Catholic Churches in all of the Slav countries. This Old Bulgarian, or Old Church Slavonic, language is still in use today in these churches.

It is thought that the orthography characters originally used were what is now known as the Glagolitic alphabet, a later style of which is still in use in a small district in Dalmatia. It was supposedly based on the Greek minuscule writing. However, this particular set of characters was never used very widely, and appears to have been replaced, in general, at a very early date by the so called Cyrillic alphabet, the use of which spread over all Slav

countries, not only in the churches, but also for the local literary languages. It is supposed to have been based on the Greek majuscule writing (more specifically on Greek uncial characters). The relationships of the peculiar Glagolitic characters to the Greek, however, are certainly not very clear on the basis of their shapes or designs; and, as a matter of fact, there are some other explanations or theories in regard to their origin. However, it will not be necessary, for the purposes of this discussion, to go into that matter any further.

The fact that an old Bulgarian dialect came to be accepted so readily throughout all Slav territories, suggests that the Slav languages of that day were even more nearly alike than they are today.

At a later date, Rome began to exert an influence over the westernmost Slav nations, which (after a more or less complicated history) became Roman Catholic, and they gradually adopted alphabets using the Latin characters. The Cyrillic alphabet, with later modifications and improvements, has been used in Russia, Bulgaria, and by the Serbians. The Poles, Czechoslovaks, Croats, and the smaller Slav nations near them, have used alphabets of the Latin type chiefly; but, unfortunately, not the same systems. Their spellings vary radically, and without doubt, this has had some effect in permitting these languages to drift apart more readily than has been the case with the more Eastern Slav languages. The Poles, for example, use a *w* for identically the same sound that is indicated by *v* in English, and in all other Slav languages except Slovene. Where the Czechs write *d'* for a soft *d*, the Croats write *dj* or *gy* or *đ*. Many other differences will become apparent when we take up the orthographies and phonologies of these languages in detail.

When the local Slav authors of the various Slavonic nations wrote manuscripts in the Old Church Slavonic, the local peculiarities of their native languages crept into their writings. Thus, although these were in general all in the same language, the Old Bulgarian, we have manuscripts in Russian Slavonic, Serbian Slavonic, Croation Slavonic etc., all of which show the effects of



local Slav languages. Likewise, this Old Bulgarian language, used in the churches, exerted an influence on the various literary Slav languages as they developed. Many words and mannerisms of Old Bulgarian were injected into the literary tongues of the different Slav countries; in fact, Old Bulgarian has had an influence upon the modern Slav languages that may be compared, to a great extent, to the influence of Latin upon the Romance languages.

As a rule, the spoken language or vernacular, tends to change more rapidly than the established written, or literary one; and the latter, therefore, tends to act as a stabilizing influence upon the spoken language. When the literary people are too conservative, or too pure in the language they use, or if the system of writing used is an inflexible one, the vernacular may become quite different from the written tongue.

In oriental countries, using inflexible old styles of character writing, the vernacular and the written languages are usually two different languages. It is necessary to "translate" from one into the other, instead of the two being more nearly like counterparts of essentially the same tongue.

In modern Czech, there is a fairly different set of adjective declensions used in the spoken language as compared to the written one, and also many other differences. As a rule, some difference between written and spoken languages can be found in all countries, although in European regions, where alphabets are used, this is not as great as in oriental countries using inflexible character writing.

The Old Bulgarian, as used in churches, has remained fundamentally the same; whereas, the Bulgarian language, as used by the Bulgarians in their literature and everyday speech, has undergone extensive changes, especially in grammar. Modern Bulgarian, therefore, is quite different from the Old Church Slavonic, which at one time was the language or dialect of a portion of the Bulgarian people, and which represents the earliest recorded Slav speech.

Just why languages change is a matter which is evidently very complicated, and depends upon a large variety of causes. When a

tendency develops for one sound or letter to be eliminated, added, or replaced by another, a great deal seems to depend on where and how the letter is used in words—that is: whether it is initial, final, or in between; whether it is accented or not; and what other sounds or letters are associated with it. Usually, when such a trend to make a change develops in a language, the trend continues until all words of the same type become changed. For example, when the letter k became silent in such English words as “knight”, all other words like “knob,” “knave,” “know,” etc., were similarly affected; although, when not initial, the letter k has not always become silent before n. In some cases, phonetic laws have been discovered which pertain to changes in words, or to their evolution. One such law is Grimm’s Law, and its exceptions, which is very useful in the analysis of consonant mutation in Indo-European languages.

For the purposes of this discussion, it will not be necessary to go into an extensive review of phonetic laws; it will suffice merely to add to the foregoing that after changes in a spoken language have reacted upon and produced changes in the written language, the latter, thereafter, in turn exerts some degree of influence upon the spoken language. This tendency means that changes in spelling, even if arbitrary, are apt to exert some influence in speech sometimes, and this is an important thing to bear in mind in connection with the alphabet changes proposed here. For an example of this tendency, we may refer to the tendency of some Slavs to make a word out of the abbreviations, Y M C A, pronouncing it “imka.”

When the Cyrillic alphabet was being worked out by the two brother missionaries, the sound of the letter B in Greek had changed to the sound now represented by the letter V in English. Consequently, the V sound is now represented by the letter B in the Cyrillic system. It is interesting to note that these two sounds (B and V) are easily confused by modern Spanish speaking people.

In the very old Slav languages, it appears that no English “h” sound was used. In more recent times, however, some ad-

mixtures of foreign words involving this sound have taken place. Furthermore, a substitution of this sound for the g sound has taken place, in general, over a large belt involving the modern High Sorb, Czechoslovak, Little Russian, White Russian, the South Great Russian dialects, and to a noticeable extent in Polish. This change has been very complete in some areas. For example, the Czechs write hlava (head) instead of glava, and similarly for all original Czech words.

Another important matter which should be mentioned here in connection with the evolution of languages and alphabets (and in connection with patriotism to languages) is that languages are not all the same in regard to grammar; that is, they do not all express ideas by employing the same, or similar, "parts of speech." Some languages differ radically, in fact, from others in their grammatical system, and in a very general way, languages may be divided into these basic classes: (1) Monosyllabic or Isolating; (2) Agglutinating; (3) Incorporating; (4) Inflecting; and (5) Analytical. All languages tend to straddle or overlap these general classes, so that as a rule, a language cannot be placed exclusively in any one of these classes. However, a great many languages are predominantly of one type or another.

The monosyllabic or isolating language, it is thought by some, represents the earliest type of speech, in which all words were of one syllable; and it is thought that combinations of syllables into words represent a later development. No modern language is strictly of this type, for all have evidently undergone thousands of years of development, even in the cases of languages of the most primitive savages that are known.

The Chinese language, in accordance with the foregoing, is considered to be one example of a language that had a fairly direct development out of the monosyllabic type. Chinese has about 420 basic monosyllabic root words in the Pekinese dialect which are eked out by variations obtained by using aspirate or "breathing" sounds with them. In order to express many times this number of ideas, as is required of a modern tongue, Chinese has also followed the special practices of varying the pronunciations

of these root words in different "tones"; and by combining them in pairs according to peculiar principles. For example, one of the several meanings of hu is "fox." The syllable li means an animal of the small cat family. By saying hu-li, a fox is very definitely indicated. Pairs of this kind are so frequently used that the spoken language could almost be called bi-syllabic. It is evident from the foregoing that the Chinese have not been developing words in the same sense as the Europeans, for example, have done, and that the Chinese language is clumsy and inflexible in comparison with the European tongues.

As a matter of fact, this writer does not believe that very primitive speech was strictly monosyllabic, because in such languages the principles of imitation and reduplication (and perhaps others) would necessarily tend to be prominent and would produce at least some types of polysyllabic words. We would probably be closer to the truth if we were to say that, in general, primitive speech was very simple as compared with present languages except in respect to a few elements (which would now seem rather special to us because their use and importance have greatly diminished); and that some of the foregoing tendencies, such as isolation, agglutination, etc., were already in operation right from the start. Among the "special" features the use of pitch (rather than modulation of the voice by means of the organs of the mouth) and the use of body motions and signs to help convey ideas were undoubtedly very prominent. It may be that, if we were to hear such a language now, we would very likely classify it as a "throat" type of speech (using the vocal chords mostly) as compared to the predominantly "mouth" types of languages which we now have. Such a language may or may not have had more monosyllabic words, relatively, than typical modern tongues have; but its words undoubtedly were much less definite and less rigid than they are now. Chinese probably is a language that developed excessively in the isolating direction and it may have been aided in that by some early Chinese systems of writing.

Their present system of writing, or written speech, which is a very old one, is considered to be better than their spoken tongue—

a rather common situation in the Orient. An Oriental scholar, it is said, often finds it necessary when speaking to make a sign with a finger to indicate just what written character (that is, what meaning of a root word) he is using or referring to. In this connection, it is interesting to note the fact that the syllable *chi*, in Chinese, is said to be represented by no less than 135 characters having different meanings.

The agglutinating languages are more or less the opposite of the isolating; they combine syllables to a root as prefixes, suffixes, and also as infixes placed within the body of the root. The result may be a long word containing a fairly complex proposition which would require a sentence to express it in some other language. The European languages of the Ural-Altaic group are of this type, although they also use inflexions of words to a great extent. Some of these languages are: Hungarian, Finnish, Tartar, Turkish, and Estonian. The total number of languages which can be classed as agglutinating is greater than the total number of any other type of language.

The incorporating languages use prefixes, suffixes and infixes, even to a greater extent than the agglutinating type, and in addition to that, they are characterized by a tendency to modify, or drop out, letters and syllables, so as to make the resultant agglutinated group of sounds easier to pronounce. They tend to consolidate, or to "incorporate," a complex proposition into one word; and some of these languages have, for that reason, been called word sentence languages. However, the degree to which this tendency obtains varies, and many languages classed as incorporating, use sentences with many words in them. Obviously, a language of the incorporating type tends to have a rather tricky sort of grammar. The American Indian languages, in general, are said to be more or less of this type.

The inflecting languages are like ancient Greek and Latin, and like some of the highly inflected European languages, in that they rely on word endings, and compound word endings, in accordance with grammatical inflections (such as declensions and conjugations) to vary the ideas conveyed by the words of a sen-

tence. With the exception of modern Bulgarian, all Slav languages are of this class. In fact, they are very highly inflected languages.

The analytical languages replace the inflections of words by the use of auxiliary words, such as prepositions. They seem, in a way, like a reversion to the first type, but having passed through centuries of development, they have the necessary auxiliary words and grammar systems to permit expressing ideas clearly and in a flexible manner. These analytical languages tend to develop out of highly inflected languages of the Indo-European group. The English language is an analytical language, and it developed out of what was formerly an inflected teutonic language, the Anglo-Saxon. The modern Bulgarian is, also, an analytical language (the only one in the Slav group), and it developed out of an inflected language, the Old Bulgarian. There has been a general overall trend for the Indo-European languages to simplify declensions, and to become more or less analytical in type, and the languages of Western Europe have progressed further along in this direction than the Eastern ones have. Except Bulgarian, modern Slav languages still have complex declensions; Great Russian and Slovene nouns having six cases, and the others having seven; whereas, modern German, for example, has only four.

The foregoing facts point to one thing in particular which should be noted carefully by Slav people, and that is that extreme patriotism to one particular language or dialect, in its present state, may really be folly instead of virtue, for it may mean that a less suitable instrument of speech and writing is being insisted upon in place of a better one. Not all languages are very suitable for expressing profound philosophical and scientific ideas, and for modern commercial use. An analytical language with a rich system of verb tenses, augmented by compound tenses formed by using auxiliary verbs, seems about the best type.

From this view, further improvement of Slav languages, in the direction in which Bulgarian has moved, seems very desirable, and Modern Bulgarian probably should be taught in all Universities and the higher schools of all Slav nations. This does not

mean that everything in this language must be considered as the best, but it is setting a good example for the others in a general way. If a change toward the analytical type is imminent for other Slav tongues, it also must be evident that it would be desirable for such a change to take place after the alphabets used have been improved and standardized, as herein suggested; for, otherwise, these very similar languages may become estranged, during such a change, beyond all limits from which there are possibilities of reunion or rapprochement.

It is of interest, in this connection, to point out several instances of different attitudes that people and their leaders display in respect to their "mother" tongues or dialects. First, we may take the case of the Irish, whose leaders recently have been trying to revive Old Irish to replace the English which most Irish people speak. Even if such a move could succeed, we would have to consider it as more or less undesirable, because it would mean that the Irish nation intentionally dropped back many centuries in discarding a good analytical language, to pick up an abandoned, highly inflected one, which would need centuries of development, probably, before it would arrive at the point where English is now. Instead of trying to revive a dead language, they ought to be glad that things worked out in such a manner that they now speak a very modern tongue.

A very different attitude is displayed by the people of Germany. Although there are districts in German speaking lands where different dialects of the German language are spoken, it seems that there have never been any very numerous difficulties caused by "autonomists" demanding separate schools and diets where these various dialects would be the "official" languages. Modern Germans are by nature a type of people who see the advantages of consolidation and unification; and, although their leaders often foster or support autonomist movements in other countries, based on language or dialect differences, nothing like that is ever tolerated within Germany. They set a splendid example, indeed, in this connection, which it would be well for Slavs to follow.

The third, and the very best example for Slavs to consider in this connection, however, is that of Norway, because a situation exists there which is very similar to that in some Slav regions, in regard to dialects and languages. Norway has a State language, "Riksmaal," which appears to be of Danish origin, and which is spoken over a great part of the country; and it also has the "Landsmaal" language, spoken in some of the western coast districts. Both of these are spoken in several dialects. Instead of waiting for autonomists and separatists to make their appearance, Norway has had a definite plan for taking care of this situation. By frequent changes in spellings and grammar, these languages are being brought closer and closer together, and it is thought that in about one hundred years, they will merge into one national language. Here, we have a sensible method for coping with a situation involving excessive numbers of dialects and languages by having a plan to facilitate merging them together. This kind of plan must naturally tend to act as an "anaesthetic", permitting a gradual "painless" reduction in the number of tongues, without excessive excitement or discontentment of the populace.

If such a reduction were brought about by enforced adoption of one of the tongues, without modification, and at the expense of the others, obviously, jealousies and discontent would result. Furthermore, from a cultural viewpoint, it is not only fair, but it is also actually very desirable that the good features of each dialect be given an opportunity to become adopted and incorporated into the eventual resultant language of an entire nation; while the poor features of all dialects, including the language or dialect of the majority, had better be displaced, if possible.

This method, therefore, is capable of producing the most satisfactory results, and it is really very unfortunate that nothing like it has so far been attempted in the Slav countries of modern times, especially in Yugoslavia, the Czechoslovak lands and Russia. The Slav people of these regions certainly could have their cultures consolidated by some such plan, coupled with the adoption of some standardized alphabet.

Giving up a mother language or dialect always seems to be



a painful thing, even if the populace can see that it will be ultimately for the best. There is always the feeling that too much is being sacrificed, that other linguistic groups are getting the best of the situation, and that the proposition in general represents "oppression" of a minority people. One can compare this to our resentment of the pain of having a tooth pulled without an anaesthetic, which we do not like regardless of the ultimate benefit. Where a suitable plan can be followed, however, which will be fair to all, and which will bring about a reduction of the unnecessary variety of tongues in the foregoing manner, it can act as an anaesthetic during the period in which the change is in progress. Once a consolidation of cultures and tongues takes place, no one, as a rule, ever wants to see a reversion to the previous conditions, because the advantages of unity and consolidation are too obvious by that time.

The Slav people are favorably situated in regard to language plans such as the Norwegian, because their languages and dialects are all very similar, and, therefore, a great deal could be accomplished in this manner. Not only a consolidation of culture and languages within each one of the independent Slav countries would be possible, within a comparatively short time; but, also, considerable rapprochement of all of them as one gigantic group should be feasible.

In the case of the greatest differences between Slav languages, such as between Czech, the westernmost one, and Russian, the easternmost one, a period of a few weeks is all that is needed for a person who speaks one of these well to learn the orthography and enough of the vocabulary of the other to be able to read and make himself understood in the other language. When the difference is less, as between Czech and Polish, a few days of practice is sufficient to accomplish corresponding results. In the case of dialects, or very similar Slav languages, such as Czech and Slovak, or the three divisions of Russian, even less effort than this is required. A typical printed page of Slovak will ordinarily have only about five words in it which a Czech will not immediately comprehend, and vice versa. Consequently, no preliminary train-

ing is really needed by the speakers of one to get along satisfactorily with speakers of the other. Czech and Slovak are really only dialects of a language. Some consider Slovene as being practically a dialect of Serbo-Croat, and the Ukrainian and White Russian as being practically only dialects of Great Russian.

The foregoing statements are especially true in respect to the written Slav languages. As soon as one learns the orthography and phonology of one of these languages, the amazing similarity of it to the others begins to unfold, with a surprising rapidity and ease of comprehension. The spoken languages often seem to differ more, because the added variations in accents and pronunciations are involved; and no doubt this apparent difference in the spoken languages, as judged by a few casual contacts, often makes Slavs feel more widely separated in race and language than they really are.

Ignorance of the real truth about this has been rather widespread among Slavs, and the lack of a standard alphabet system, and the lack of Slav schools where proper information about these matters could be given, have been contributing factors. The Slav inhabitants of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire were given so little information about themselves in German schools that they were in general unaware of their relationships. Slav immigrants from Austria-Hungary often did not call themselves by the real Slav name of the area or district they came from; they did not use such names as Czechoslovak or Yugoslav; but they were inclined to call themselves: Dalmatians, Herzegovinians, Bosnians, Galicians, Bohemians, Moravians, Hungarians, Austrians, etc. In other words, they often knew practically nothing about themselves, from a social and nationalistic viewpoint, except the name of the locality they came from, and the local name for their dialect.

By the terms of the Versailles Treaty, the majority of the Slav people under foreign rule in Central Europe became citizens of three Slav countries—former Poland, former Czechoslovakia, and former Yugo-slavia. (Bulgaria lost some small districts.) An opportunity for the consolidation of the dialects and cultures

of most of these people has been present, but in view of the absence of any definite plans for achieving consolidations, the results have been very unsatisfactory—as might have been expected.

Wherever these people have or have had common frontiers or boundaries, they have been at sword points most of the time, due to fears and jealousies, and the opportunistic policies pursued in general by many Slav leaders. No important consolidation within any of these regions has taken place, nor could there have been any definite rapprochement between them as a whole in view of the above circumstances. What has been revealed is the tragic fact that, having never been consolidated politically for a long period prior to the time printing came into extensive use, it is not easy for a consolidation of cultures and dialects to take place now when extensive literatures actually exist in the various tongues. Further digression seems to be the tendency, rather than consolidation, and this will undoubtedly persist unless careful plans are laid to standardize alphabets and to counteract this tendency.

What might have been comparatively easy to accomplish once has become very difficult, and the situation is not at all improved by the fact that in some cases the political leaders of some of the majority Slav groups have pursued policies which were unfair, or of questionable purpose, from the view of the minority Slav groups. There have been so called Pan-Slav movements, instigated occasionally by leaders of the majority Slav groups; but, as these were usually purely political in nature, involving no such thing as standardization of alphabets or unification of cultures on a fair give-and-take basis, such movements never met with much favor or success. Their intent was always either impractical or too one-sided.

Many people would undoubtedly ascribe the foregoing difficulties of the Slavs in Central Europe to differences in political or social ideologies. It is true that these have caused some of the difficulties, and it is true that people will sometimes allow themselves to become very passionately antagonistic over such matters. However, such circumstances would never account for all of the

troubles which beset the Slav populations of this area; for antagonisms have been generated by propagandists where ideologies are practically identical, and where the chief differences are in language or dialect. From a religious viewpoint, for example, the difference between Croats and Serbs in Yugoslavia is that the former are Roman Catholics, and the latter are Greek Catholics. Small as this difference is, the fact that there is an added slight difference in dialect has made it possible for foreign wire pullers to generate considerable trouble between these two groups by capitalizing upon this linguistic difference.

In Czechoslovak regions, both the Czechs and Slovaks are Roman Catholics. The only difference here lies in a slight difference in degree of Catholicism; that is, from about 95% to 100% of the Slovaks are Catholics, whereas, only 85% to 90% of the Czechs are Catholics. Obviously, there is not much ground for bitter antagonism in this difference, yet, since it is coupled with a slight difference in language, it has been possible for propagandists and autonomists to cause considerable trouble and to prevent consolidation. In the Soviet Union, both the Great Russians and Ukrainians are people who were formerly 95% to 100% Greek Catholics, and at present, undoubtedly the degrees of Atheism and Catholicism which obtain under the Soviet regime must be about the same in both of these divisions of Russians. Yet, in view of a slight difference in language, considerable trouble from autonomists and separatists had been experienced (prior to the Nazi attack upon Russia). These facts show that a slight linguistic difference can serve as a very convenient and effective tool for propagandists and wire pullers to confuse and estrange population groups which are, otherwise, practically identical, and which really have common interests.

When autonomous arrangements, or special sub-divisions of a political nature are brought about, for reasons of doubtful character, it can hardly be said that the people so "favored" are any better off after the change than before.

As a result of the Munich Conference of 1938, local diets were created for the Slovaks and Russianians of Czechoslovakia.

Immediately after this change, differences developed between the Slovaks and Russianians over their minorities, so that an additional boundary or border trouble, existing formerly only in an embryonic stage, came to be magnified into a more serious matter. Thus additional disputes are brought to a critical stage, while old ones, instead of being settled by grants of autonomy, continue to exist.

The foregoing changes did not settle differences of the Czechs with the Slovaks, Russianians and others; on the contrary, such differences were only intensified, and at the same time new differences were created. The final outcome, as is well known, was that a few months of "autonomy" and a few days of "independence" eventually led to the complete subjugation of all the former Slav inhabitants of Czechoslovakia under German and Hungarian rule. Thus, misguided Slav minorities, goaded into dissatisfaction with a Slav government, came to be subjects of non-Slav governments, with which they have much more reason to be dissatisfied. The most unfortunate part of the entire affair, of course, is that a satisfied majority suffered the same fate and is paying heavily for the tragedy.

In general, except for the few new local officials, created by autonomous arrangements, such as the foregoing, who, of course, obtained bigger jobs than they had before, it cannot be said that such political sub-divisions added to the welfare and happiness of the Slav people involved. Only consolidations, properly executed, can do that.

Subdivision is always definitely a step in the wrong direction. From the viewpoint of a citizen of the United States of America, in which country troublesome minorities, demanding special linguistic autonomies, would ordinarily be "chased into holes in the ground", the Czechoslovak dismemberment reveals a tragic lack of a proper Slav viewpoint on the part of the Slav leaders who helped in various ways to bring about the dissolution of this republic.

In this connection, it is probably appropriate to discuss the "independence of a United Ukraine" which, it seems is desired by

some Ukrainians; and significantly, also, by the very same foreign interests who have been interested in driving as many wedges as possible between Czechs, Slovaks, Poles, and Russianians. This proposed state would be completely independent of Russia and would include all of the Ukrainians of Russia, Roumania and former Poland, who speak a fairly large variety of dialects. It would, also, include the several million Ruthenians of former Poland, whose dialect differs from that of the other, or "real," Ukrainians; and it would include the Russianians of the former Czechoslovak state, who also have a dialect of their own.

On the whole, such a state, from a Slav viewpoint, would not be much more consolidated, in a linguistic way, than was Czechoslovakia, and the history and final fate of the latter gives us a good hint of what the history and final fate of a "United Ukraine" would be like, if the foreign interests were to have their way. The most natural subdivisions for the Slavs are, as already mentioned in Chapter I, the Eastern or Russian division, the Polish division, the Czechoslovak division, and the Southern (Balkan) Slav division. This means that the main portion of the Ukrainians are now where they properly belong—within the Russian Union. The only additional improvements urgently needed by them (and by all Slavs) are the means for consolidation advocated here.

As this is being written, it so happens that agitation for an independent United Ukraine has practically ceased, at least for the time being. Probably the principal reason for that has been the brutal treatment given to the Ukrainians themselves by the invading Nazi armies, which were supposed to function as "liberators" of the Ukraine area. This has made it all too clear that a large "United" Slav state has never really been part of any Nazi plan for future Europe. However, this present situation does not insure that Ukrainian separatists will not again become active at some opportune moment. The only real safeguard against such schemes, in the long run, would be a cultural and linguistic consolidation of the major groups of Russians so as to make the possibility for success of any such plan practically nil.

The chief underlying source of trouble in the Slav territories

of Central Europe (where separatism is exceptionally prone to take root) is a peculiar kind of language phenomenon which seems to obtain when people of very similar linguistic groups of small size are subject to alternate periods of freedom and subjugation, as a result of altering political and military setbacks and victories of a large neighboring state, of a foreign, or not too closely related, linguistic group of people.

To illustrate this phenomenon, we may assume a hypothetical case of two closely related small groups of people existing in territories adjacent to each other, and ruled over by a third much larger group. We will assume they speak very similar languages or dialects and, at the beginning of the "cycle" which we are about to describe, they are very friendly because they are experiencing the same kind of oppression by a stronger nation. Their schools and publications are suppressed, and they find it convenient to cooperate politically in order to obtain whatever concessions are possible to be gained. Their literary leaders are, in general, patriotic to both groups, as a whole, and are opposed to the development of separate literatures for the two groups, due to their small size, and the similarity of their dialects and tongues. In fact, during their long period of subjugation, one could almost say that some degree of consolidation takes place between them, but it is a type of consolidation which takes place chiefly because there were handicaps to development in any direction, and this prevented digression to a certain extent.

It may be stated, as a matter of course, that both groups lose heavily in population growth, for many of their people become "denationalized" by adopting the language of the oppressor nation during this subjugation period. Then, after perhaps one or more centuries, there takes place a general political and military upheaval, such as occurs occasionally, and both of these small groups win freedom and are incorporated into one independent state, with the dialect of the majority group, or most progressive group, as the official language. Schools are established to teach both dialects, for the country is a democratic one, and newspapers and other publications in both dialects multiply. Very soon, fairly ex-

tensive literatures in both dialects exist, and the leaders or "founders" of the democracy begin to be confronted with numerous political demands from the minority, one of these demands being for local autonomy with a separate local parliament.

The leaders, or founders had thought that the two groups could exist side by side, as before, in a friendly relationship. They had overlooked the fact that these groups will actually either merge into one, or digress farther and farther apart, because they will not remain static in one constant relationship to each other. As no plans had been made to aid merging and consolidation, from all viewpoints, including the cultural and linguistic one, a digression is quite the natural result. The demands for autonomy continue to be made, and the wire pullers of the neighboring foreign nation begin to help the minority in its activity for achieving its aims in this direction, because the foreign neighbor well knows that this will weaken both groups and prepare for their eventual downfall. Finally, through foreign outside support, autonomy is won, because autonomists become more and more fanatical about the matter, and press their demands the most, when the country is in the weakest position from an international viewpoint. Even if it means loss of territory, as payment for foreign support, autonomists will not stop in their demands. They believe in catching a mosquito, even if an elephant must be allowed to escape, if that mosquito happens to concern them more directly for some reason or other.

After gaining autonomy, the matter is not definitely settled, for digression continues with even faster tempo, because there are now still fewer forces tending toward consolidation, and more tending toward digression. Finally, a movement for actual separation gets started, and soon there are established two separate, independent countries. These are very bitter enemies, for they are neighbors, and it seems to be almost an iron-bound, inflexible rule in Europe, that countries which have a common frontier, must tend to be enemies (especially when they are small). Each one fears that the other, through an opportunistic foreign policy, may manage to get into a combination of aggressor nations of su-



perior military power and, thereby, seize some territory. The final outcome is that both of these countries become involved in wars in which their strength is wasted and they are again subjugated as before by the large foreign nation. No doubt, we may add, that in subjugation, these two similar groups of people again recognize their close relationship, and again cooperate against their common oppressor. But, how many of these "cycles" can they pass through before they both lose their national identity? In each period of subjugation, and these tend to be long, these small groups lose considerable numbers of their population through denationalization, so that they drop back in respect to other nations; and such setbacks are not completely made up in their periods of freedom, due to the short and troublesome nature of these latter periods.

The foregoing history of a pair of closely related linguistic groups does not precisely apply to any two of the Slav nations mentioned in this discussion, but those who have followed developments in Central Europe, especially since the Versailles Treaty, can easily recognize sections of the foregoing "cycle" as identical with some of the actual happenings that have taken place with respect to the various Slav nations and their subdivisions.

How infinitely better it would be for the Slavs of Central Europe to recognize the advantages of unity and consolidation, and of a common cultural language for use over large areas, and to strive to hold on to their freedom in as large and consolidated units as is practicable! There are, as already mentioned, about 60,000,000 Slavs in this area, and interspersed among them, excluding Italy and Germany proper, there are about 25,000,000 non-Slav people. Most of the latter are Roumanians, Hungarians and Germans. It is evident that the Slavs are the majority people in this area, and in order to enable them to have a reasonable degree of control over their own destiny, and to make possible their own "self-determination", it is desirable for them to do as much as is possible to consolidate their cultures and their alphabets along the lines suggested in the following chapters. Their chief obstacles are linguistic, and the problem which confronts them

from the alphabetic viewpoint involves them all. It is the problem of the majorities, in other words, and not the minorities of Central Europe, which needs the greatest attention, and this particular problem is not especially concerned with ideologies of government, nor with ideologies of any other sort.

It should not be assumed that the foregoing statements mean that a complete union of all Slavs into one state is being advocated here. In fact, no very radical political change of any sort is needed for the time being—except liberation of Slavs from foreign domination which, of course, is obviously desirable. A standardization of alphabets, and some movement toward a gradual unification of culture, however, are very desirable for all Slavs, because such an improvement in orthography, and the adoption of such an attitude toward Slav culture, will improve the relations between all Slav nations immediately.

A "goal", such as some kind of a unification of culture, will displace the fears, jealousies, and opportunistic policies, which now tend to develop; and will provide for possibilities of friendly relationships, and commercial as well as cultural intercourse, between all Slav nations and all of their sub-divisions. Every previous attempt to consolidate the Slavs failed, more or less, because political changes were the first and really the primary objective. The primary objective should be the cultural unification of Slavs, regardless of the political situation; and the latter situation will, in due course of time, readjust itself in a manner favorable for all who will be involved.

From a commercial and social viewpoint, the establishment of friendly relations between the Slav states will permit more economical distribution of manufactured goods, thereby, raising the standards of living in these countries. A continued state of tension over opportunistic foreign policies with closed frontiers, is not conducive to such improvements; and neither is sub-division into many small independent states, with the resultant increase in boundary lines, which always impede commerce. More consolidation and more unification, wherever practicable, should be the

objectives of the Slavs, rather than more autonomy and more sub-division into separate states.

It must be recognized, however, that as things now stand, there may be a practical need for autonomy in some cases, and independence in others. The Slav languages do have differences, which in the extreme cases are too large, at present, to permit employing them with ease and effectiveness throughout all Slav countries in an interchangeable manner. And, as a matter of fact, there are entirely too many Slavs to make it a desirable proposition for them all to be within one gigantic state of any of the past or present types. Cultural unity, however, of some degree is very desirable for the entire Slav world.

Besides discussing the position of the Slav people of Russia and Central Europe, as the majority people in these areas, some mention should probably be made here of the non-Slav minorities which live in the same area, especially within the Soviet Union. The Russian Soviet Union has, as already stated, a great number of non-Slav linguistic groups, much greater, in fact, than the total number of Slav groups that exist. The great majority of these non-Slav groups are, however, very small in total population, the size of the nations or tribes being more or less comparable to those of the North American Indian tribes in most cases. They live mostly in the Caucasus and Siberian areas, and their languages are more primitive in general, than are the Aryan languages of Europe.

It has been the policy of the Soviets to encourage all of these minorities to use their native tongues, and Russian students of these languages have worked out alphabets, so that printed literature can be made available in the native tongues. Is this a safe and suitable policy to follow, and what should be the attitude of such minorities to the use of Russian, for example, in relation to the foregoing discussion?

We may say, without hesitation, that the foregoing policy is fraught with danger, unless sufficient instruction in Russian is given; and unless information is also given about languages in general, so that the superior features of Russian for use as a gen-

eral cultural language, and as a State language, will be evident to these racial and linguistic minorities. In case of a total lack of knowledge about types of languages, and the superior qualities of Russian, an inflected Aryan type of language, it would be possible some day for propagandists to stir these minority nations to fanatical demands for more autonomy, or for actual separation. In fact, separatist movements are said to have been underway in some of these minority areas. As such demands become the most insistent when the country as a whole is in a weak situation, it is evident that each one of these arrangements for facilitating the use of a more primitive non-Slav language is a potential boomerang, which may strike the country a damaging blow at some time in the future when it will be at least capable of resisting. A bilingual education, now pursued to a certain extent in these areas, is really the best policy for such small minorities; for, by such a practice, they may retain the native non-Slav tongue as long as they wish, but at the same time they acquire a better language which can serve them throughout a greater area.

The language situation alone is not the only matter, however, for small minorities to consider in the above circumstances. People living within vast landlocked areas, having no short routes to connect them with the rest of the world, need to be united in large States from an economic viewpoint for, otherwise, they would be in a miserable situation. This, as a matter of fact, is true even for those who live along the outer fringes of such a vast area as we are now considering. For an example, we may refer to some of the Baltic Sea Coast countries, such as Estonia and Lithuania, which temporarily won independence from Russia as a result of German demands upon Russia after the latter sued for peace in the World War I.

Estonia had a population and an area both of which were less than 1% as large as the population and area of Russia. Lithuania had a population and an area which were both less than 2% of the population and area of the Russian territories. From an economic viewpoint, the future generations of Estonians and Lithuanians would be forced to eke out an existence within an area

and among a population less than 1% and 2%, respectively, of that over and among which they formerly could roam freely to adjust themselves, and their talents, to the varied economic opportunities. Did the national "heroes" who were instrumental in bringing about this "independence" of their countrymen really do their nations some good, or did they not accomplish what is practically the same as shutting up the entire nation in each case in a sort of self-imposed imprisonment?

Being independent of Russia, no doubt the future generations in these two States would not study the Russian language as much as formerly; for, by the usual procedure in Europe, Russia would be considered more or less an enemy country. Therefore, these future generations of Estonians and Lithuanians would lack the lingual equipment, as well as the inclination, to avail themselves of opportunities in the large Russian state. Fortunately, the more recent developments, resulting (prior to the German invasion) in a reunion between these Baltic countries (including Latvia) and Russia, will serve to correct this situation.

It is far better, as a rule, for a small group of people, to be a part of a large State from military, cultural, and economic viewpoints, than to be a part of a small State; and this continues to be true even if some national or racial pride must be subdued in order to gain these advantages. It was one thing for the Slavs of the pre-war Austria-Hungary to demand autonomy or independence, and it is quite a different matter for a very small nation to do the same. The Slavs of Austria-Hungary, as a whole, were actually, or nearly, the majority people in the State (depending somewhat on whose population figures are used). In any case, they obviously could not be expected to be satisfied to have a Germanic culture thrust upon them when they were a group large enough to have their own culture, and when they had other closely related cultures and languages in nearby States. For a very small nation, however, it is often folly to insist upon complete independence, especially if its language and culture are more or less completely isolated, or if it is surrounded by distantly related nations.

A far better solution of the situation for such people is to

try to lead as satisfying and as glorious an existence as is possible within another much larger nation, and some of the minorities within Russia have been doing just that for many centuries, apparently with reasonable satisfaction to all concerned. Such minorities are really happier and better off than those that gain independence with all of the shortcomings that often go with independence. Not even the largest non-Slav minority groups within the present Russian Union, such as the Tartars or Georgians, would actually have anything worthwhile to gain by forming independent states.

In order to derive the greatest use and benefit from modern inventions (communication facilities, industrial processes, etc.) it is desirable for very large groups of people, distributed over large areas, to be more or less united or associated in economic and cultural blocks, which ought to have probably from 50,000,000 to 100,000,000, or more, people in each to make it worthwhile. Obviously, the more closely these are also consolidated in a military and political way, the better it will be for them; and this is a matter that deserves serious thought, not only from Russian minorities, but also from the people of all of the small Slav nations of Central Europe and their sub-divisions.

### CHAPTER III

#### GENERAL FACTS ABOUT ALPHABETS

If a concerted attempt were to be made by the various Slav countries to eliminate the previously mentioned undesirable and troublesome features in their relations with each other, and to bring about a proper degree of friendliness between all Slav nations, it would be necessary, first of all, to standardize the alphabets used in these countries as completely as is possible. Their alphabets vary considerably more than what would be necessary to take care of the differences in their languages. The greatest variations, at the present time, are due to the use of Latin type characters by some, and Cyrillic characters by others,—the largest country using the latter being the Soviet Union.

The Russians are said to have experimented with the adoption of a Latin type alphabet for their minorities; and, therefore, if a satisfactory system adaptable to the Russian language, as well as to others, were worked out, it should be acceptable to these Eastern Slavs. If such a change were to be made by the Eastern Slavs, it would be very unfortunate indeed if the others were to fail to take advantage of such a situation to modify their own alphabets so that all Slav people could use essentially the same system.

The advantages which the adoption of a standardized alphabet could bring to the Slav people would be tremendous. Their languages, as already mentioned, are all very similar, and when

written in the same system, the similarity will be all the more evident. Therefore, it will become convenient to take advantage of that situation. The time and work required for the people of one Slav country to learn to read any or all Slav writings, in books, magazines, newspapers, etc., will be greatly reduced, thereby, tending to consolidate the literatures and cultures of the entire Slav world.

The foregoing effect, and the obviously beneficial effects upon commerce and the political situations, are not the only good results, however, which may be expected from such a change. A very important possibility which a standardized alphabet, of the proper degree of adaptability to all Slav languages and dialects, can bring about, is that of using combined dictionaries, in the cases of the very similar languages, so that one dictionary will cover the vocabularies of two or more similar languages. This could replace the use of separate dictionaries, with their slight differences in spellings or alphabets, which practice tends to prevent assimilation of words of related tongues into one, larger, language. The adoption of such common dictionaries can help to bring about gradual mergers of some of the very similar Slav tongues.

One thing which can be a hindrance to the merging of two similar languages is the absence in the alphabet used for one of the languages of a letter for a sound used only in the other, because this prevents or makes impossible a phonetic spelling for some words of the second language in the alphabet of the first. For example, at present the Russian alphabet has no letter for the h sound, although the Ukrainian language, using a similar alphabet, has an extra letter for this sound. It is really queer that the Bolsheviki did not recognize this h sound and adopt the Ukrainian way of representing it when they made some improvements in Russian spellings in 1918, after they came into power. Also, it seems queer that they should have dropped the use of the letter i, which was being used in Russian to designate the ee sound (as in the English word "thee") when followed by a vowel starting another syllable. They ought to have retained this letter



and they should have made such modifications in phonography that the Russian characters for this ee sound and for the thick i sound (as in the English word "sit") would correspond to those used in Ukrainian.

At present, Ukrainian has a character to represent the latter sound, whereas, Russian has not. By making the foregoing provisions so the Russian and Ukrainian alphabets would be interchangeable, a common dictionary would have been made possible, and the Ukrainian problem (or Ukrainian demands for independence) could have been well on the way toward a permanent and peaceful "liquidation" by this time.

A somewhat related hindrance to the amalgamation of dialects or languages exists if the two closely related tongues employ the same letters and spellings for certain classes of words, but pronounce them in distinctly different ways. A situation of that type exists in the Czech and Slovak languages. In Slovak, the consonants d, t, l and n, are usually softened or palatalized when followed by i, í, or e. This means that syllables, such as de, te, le, ne, etc., are pronounced d'e, t'e, l'e, ñe, etc., although they are never written as such. In Czech a soft pronunciation is not the general rule for all of the foregoing cases and when it is used, the orthography may differ from the Slovak. For example, in Czech, de is always pronounced in the hard manner, the soft pronunciation of this syllable being indicated by dě.

This situation is far from being satisfactory. There are exceptions to this Slovak rule, even in the case of certain classes of true Slovak words; and, obviously, it is not possible to spell many Czech and other foreign words in the Slovak system in a phonetic manner. In fact, the Slovak system is a good example of an objectionable type of orthography based on representing certain pronunciations by certain sequences of letters, because foreign words are hardly ever adaptable to systems of that kind. The result is that this kind of orthography tends to prevent development of the language in a free and natural manner, and it may be a serious hindrance to amalgamation of similar languages, as it has been in this case.

If a difference in pronunciation, such as the above difference between Czech and Slovak, applied only to certain letters in the initial or final positions in words, it could be considered as a minor variation in speech or dialect requiring no differences in spellings. In this instance, however, a suitable alphabet, which could provide phonetic spellings for both of the tongues, without objectionable complications in the orthography, is badly needed. The alphabet discussed in the next chapter provides the desired solution in this case; and, although written Slovak and Czech would differ a trifle more than they do now, the difference would be slight; and, as the change will make possible a common dictionary, the really important result would be that the spoken languages would gradually tend to sound more nearly alike than they do now.

When the orthography used by related languages differs radically, as in the case of the Croat and Serb alphabets, the situation represents a hindrance to amalgamation of the tongues almost regardless of how similar the languages may be. In this instance, they are merely sub-dialects of the same tongue, but as long as separate dictionaries are published, and some slight differences in pronunciation exist, the situation is such that no improvement tends to take place over a long period of time, and political propagandists naturally take all advantage they can of the situation. The proper solution in this case, obviously, is the standardization of the alphabets used and the publishing of a combined dictionary.

It should not be assumed that the foregoing changes could produce immediate changes in the spoken dialects. However, they would remove serious hindrances to development of the tongues in such directions that amalgamations would necessarily result eventually.

A standard alphabet suitable for use in all Slav countries is quite possible. Before discussing its application in the various languages involved, however, it seems advisable to mention some of the desirable features which such an alphabet should possess. One matter which requires consideration is the degree to which

such an alphabet must be phonetically accurate. As a general rule, the more phonetic an alphabet is, the better it is from the educational viewpoint; but there are some variations in pronunciation which tend to take place in such an automatic manner that it is better not to try to vary spellings strictly in accordance with them.

For example, there is a tendency (very pronounced in Slav languages) to change voiced consonants into voiceless consonants under certain conditions. One of these conditions may occur when the consonant is final, in which case a "d" tends to change to a "t", a "v" to an "f", and so on. But when circumstances are modified, as when an added syllable of inflexion is joined to the word, the regular pronunciation of the letter may be used. In such cases it is usually better not to try to vary the spellings, as that would be a complicated procedure, although in pronouncing dictionaries the exact phonetic values of the letters may be given. This is one case, therefore, in which the spellings used in the ordinary written language, may vary somewhat from the true phonetic equivalents in dictionaries.

When we pronounce the syllables ki, ka and ku, each one of the three "k" sounds is somewhat different from the others. However, as each variety of k is always associated with the same vowel sound, and never with the others, this matter takes care of itself automatically, and no variations of the letter k are needed in ordinary writing, nor are they given even in dictionaries.

In the cases previously given of the hard syllable de and the soft one dě we have the same consonant associated with the same vowel in each case, but the pronunciations of both differ. Obviously, something like the ˇ mark, or some other satisfactory device, is needed to show the change in sounds. The syllables involving the examples of k sounds take care of a change automatically, the other two do not.

Another example of changes in sound that take place automatically, are the variations in vowels produced by accents. A vowel in an accented syllable may be sounded somewhat differently than when the same vowel is in an unaccented syllable. Such

variations need not be specifically indicated in the written language, although dictionaries and grammars may give the true phonetic values.

The foregoing examples serve to illustrate that a good alphabetic system should be adaptable to various degrees of precision in giving phonetic values. It must be capable of showing the exact, or practically the exact, sounds in pronouncing dictionaries and grammar books. It should be capable of indicating variations in sounds which are not automatic, nor self-evident, in a simple manner, so that the orthography as used in newspapers, magazines and ordinary books will be easy to read. Finally, it should be adaptable, with still less phonetic precision perhaps, to special display type of various kinds. Not all of the foregoing phonetic variations need to be clearly indicated in the last instance, because what is more important in this case is freedom or flexibility for type design. Likewise, for longhand writing the system need not be more phonetically elaborate than what is required for the local language. Fundamentally, however, the alphabetic system should be such that it can be readily adapted to these varying demands without requiring radical changes when it is called upon to show phonetic values in more complete detail.

One matter which should be made clear at this point is that making orthography phonetically clear, and making it easy to read, are two very different things. The English system is notoriously lacking in phonetic clarity. Yet this defect is of importance only when one is learning new English words, for then the spelling and pronunciation must be memorized due to this lack of phonetic clarity. On the other hand, however, one who knows English well, finds it easy to read compared to most other orthographies. It is easier to read than present Czech or Polish, for the latter use diacritics over the letters, which make reading difficult. It is also easier to read than Russian, for English has a smaller number of letters, and they are simpler and developed better from this viewpoint than the modern Cyrillic system as used in Russian. That is just why any standardized alphabet for Slav languages

ought to be based primarily on the English or Latin alphabet characters.

To illustrate the lack of phonetic clarity of English, we may take for an example the vowel "a" which has the following eight sounds in English as recognized by Webster's Dictionary:

- ā as in the English word lāte
- â as in the English word délicâte
- â as in the English word câre
- ǣ as in the English word cǣn
- ǣ as in the English word ärm
- à as in the English word àsk
- ạ as in the English word whạt
- ạ as in the English word cạll

Inasmuch as none of the above diacritics are used in ordinary English writing, to indicate these variations, it is evident that one must memorize a great deal about the pronunciation. Furthermore, in English, some letters are used sometimes for the same sound which in other words is indicated by a different letter. The a in "what" has the same value as the o in "nốt", for instance.

Additional difficulties result from the use of combinations of letters to denote certain sounds, like the sh sound in "should" and the ch sound in "church", etc. Such a lack of phonetic spelling is obviously undesirable; but it is important to know, nevertheless, that that does not necessarily make an orthography tiresome, and that a phonetic one, on the other hand, may be very tiresome.

In view of the foregoing, it is evident that if some kind of a standard orthography were to be developed for the Slav languages, a matter of fundamental importance will be the question of how to represent the great variety of sounds over which such an alphabet must range. There are three general ways of doing that which could be adopted, namely:

- 1—Use of a large number of letters
- 2—Use of combinations of letters
- 3—Use of diacritics or marks associated with the letters

The first method has the advantage of being clear, and it

tends to produce orthographies which are easier to read than when diacritics are used. For example, the present Russian alphabet is considered somewhat less tiresome than the Czech and Polish. On the other hand, however, this method is very inflexible, for each time a new sound element in a foreign word needs to be represented phonetically, a new character, or resorting to the other methods, becomes necessary. Also, this method is not so very well adapted to "modern machine-age methods", because much writing is now done on typewriters, and this method would require large numbers of keys on such machines. Finally, and most important of all, this method is not at all adaptable to showing, clearly, certain classes or varieties of sounds which have some common element in them, in a manner that will show this relationship.

A good example of the latter class of sounds are the pairs of soft consonants and vowels already mentioned in connection with the Czech and Slovak languages. Such sounds occur rather profusely in Slav languages in general, and they all involve an assimilation of an "ee" sound in such a manner that the preceding consonant is modified, and more or less tied, or blended, to the following vowel with a j-glide. Sometimes some of the consonants are pronounced in a soft or palatalized manner when not followed by a vowel; and some vowels may be pronounced similarly, that is with a j-glide, when not preceded by a consonant, or when preceded by a hard consonant. Obviously, some standard device which can indicate this softness of pronunciation is, or can be, better than special characters provided that a device can be found which will not have the bad features of special characters, nor of ordinary diacritics.

The second method, it should be made clear, refers to the use of special combinations of letters to represent sounds which are not the regular or normal result of slurring, or combining of the sounds represented by the letters used, or their euphonic variations. The usual proper diphthongs, digraphs, and other combinations used to represent the slurred sounds that are usually considered as being represented by such combinations (in which the various

sounds of the letters in the combination are readily recognizable) are, of course, satisfactory and necessary. The so-called "pure" digraphs, however, in which two (or more) letters represent a single sound, are neither satisfactory nor necessary.

In the English word "should" the combination sh represents a sound often designated by š which differs from both s and h. Similarly, in the English word "church" the ch combination represents a sound often designated by č which is not equal to c+h, nor to euphonic variations of these two sounds, when slurred. Obviously, combinations such as these, to represent single sounds, do not make it clear just how the words should be pronounced; and pronunciation, therefore, involves a great deal of memorization.

As a general rule, special letter combinations should be avoided, although there are some special situations in which this practice is admissible. In Russian a considerable portion of the soft pronunciations (although not all) are indicated by a special letter called the "soft mark." This soft mark serves to indicate palatalization, or softening, like the letters j and i do in some of the other Slav languages which use the Latin system. In connection with the alphabet proposed in the following chapter, it will be noted that to a small degree it seems advisable to continue the latter practice, although the main portion of the soft sounds will be designated in a different and better manner.

With regard to the third method, namely, the practice of associating certain marks, or diacritics, with letters to denote extra sounds, it is possible to divide the ways in which this can be done into two general types. The first, the usual procedure, consists of placing a mark over or under a letter in such a manner that the mark is very conspicuous. Usually, such diacritics are detached from the letter itself, that is, they do not form a part of it. As a result, a page written or printed in this system has a pock-marked appearance, and it is tiresome to read it. For some special display type, this style might have merit; but for general use, it is objectionable.

The other style would be the use of marks that will not be so conspicuous, and, preferably, will form a part of the letter itself

instead of being detached. An idea of what this should be like is provided by comparing the Ukrainian Cyrillic character for g, which is Г, with their character for h, which is Т. These letters are practically the same, except for a very slight difference in the horizontal line (or in the serif at its end), so that one can almost be considered to be a marked form of the other. A suitable system of marking letters, in ways more or less embodying the same idea, should not have the disadvantages found with usual diacritics, and from all other viewpoints such a system would be about the best. The fact that even the actual absence of the diacritics is really no hindrance to a well informed reader, as explained in connection with the English system, and the fact that true phonetic values are indicated in detail by the proposed marks, so that pronunciation of unfamiliar words can always be determined accurately, serve to make this proposed system capable of combining the best features of the English system with the best features of a fully phonetic system based on using diacritics.

Additional examples from the Cyrillic system that are comparable to the foregoing, are the addition of a small mark at the bottom of the character for the sh sound to designate the "shcha" sound (as in Russian) and the addition of a similar mark to an inverted p sound character to designate the ts sound combination. In these cases however, the modified character always represents a completely different kind of a sound, and does not represent the incorporation or blending of one element with another in such a manner that the original, or principal sound, is still definitely recognizable in the result, which is the usual characteristic of the sounds represented by the modified or marked letters in the following discussion.

Before going into further details about the kinds of marks to be used, it is desirable to explain a little more about grouping the sounds that are to be associated with one kind of a mark. The hissing sounds š, č and ž all seem to have a sort of common element blended in them, as is indicated by the fact that their pronunciations are often considered to correspond to blending together in a special manner these pairs respectively: sh, ch, and zh. We



could, therefore, consider the ˇ mark as representing the h element in each of these blended sounds. There are other sounds which could also be considered as belonging to this group. The Polish language has two sets of these hissing sounds, one set is considered as having soft sounds (ś ć ź), and the other set are hard sounds (sz cz ż). The exact difference between these two sets will be explained later, but what should be noted here particularly is that all six (in the foregoing order) might be indicated in this manner, using the ˇ mark as a sign of the blended h element: ś ˇ ć ˇ ź ˇ. No matter where placed, the ˇ mark here represents a blended h element, but these cases illustrate that location may, also, signify something about the pronunciation if necessary.

In the foregoing examples the marks above the letters indicate softness, and those placed below, hardness. The Czech ř could also belong to this group of sounds, because it usually represents a blend of rž and this represents a blend of rzh and this has the h element in it. Similarly, as will be explained later, the Polish rz could be represented by r<sub>h</sub>—and similarly for any other blend of sounds that can be considered as having an h element in it.

A nasal a is sometimes indicated by the spelling ahn, the h serving to represent an element of this nasal sound. While this is something different from the foregoing kinds of blends, nevertheless, we would be reasonably consistent in writing a<sub>h</sub> for a nasal a, and similarly for all other nasal vowels, thus enlarging the group of letters with which the ˇ mark could be associated to represent sounds having, in some way or another, an h element in them. This ˇ mark thus becomes a sign for an assimilated h, and might be called the h-mark or the h-sign. The theta sound, represented by th in English, could be written t<sub>h</sub> and many other sounds, not fundamentally Slavic, could be represented phonetically in this manner when required.

Similarly, another mark can be used to represent the soft pronunciations of some letters in Slav languages. As this will represent an assimilated or blended i or j, it may be called the i-mark, or the j-mark. For example, using a simple dot for such a mark,

the following pairs of letters would have the soft or palatalized pronunciation: dè, dà, dū, tè, tà, etc. The vowel i could be written ì to indicate this softness, and the consonants when soft and not followed by a vowel could be written ċ, ģ, ŋ, ĵ, etc. It is not absolutely necessary that these marks be uniformly above or below the various letters, except when that is needed to indicate some additional quality in the sound in some group of letters.

To a considerable extent, in other words, the marks may be placed so as to fit the letter designs in the best way. The placing of the marks may not be the same for capital letters as for the small letters; or, on the other hand, the designs of the letters may be so modified as to facilitate placing the marks in as uniform a manner as is possible. The general idea is that a mark may be used to represent a sign for some certain element in the pronunciation when associated with letters which may be pronounced in such a way as to involve that element. When used with other letters not in such a group, the mark may have an entirely different meaning, which will increase its usefulness.

The foregoing may not seem to be different from the manner in which diacritics have always been used, except that the extent of the use of each mark is enlarged. However, that is just the feature which is of great importance from the view of adopting such an alphabet for use with typewriting and composing machines; and, also, for adapting such machines to such an alphabet.

It would not be very difficult to make a kind of typewriter which would have some keys that could make such marks as the foregoing, above or under the letters, after the letters have been typed. That is, the operation of the key for the mark or diacritic, would not operate the escapement of the carriage, but would, due to the type-bar design, make the mark over or under the previously typed letter. Any letter could be either marked or not marked, as desired by the typist. Obviously, this increases the number of combinations of letters and marks greatly, and yet the number of keys used would only be slightly more than are now used, for example, in a typewriter for the English language.

This kind of an "accenting" typewriter would, therefore, be

well adapted to an alphabet system using marks in the way that has been suggested. Four additional keys to type marks of two kinds over or under the small letters, or the capitals, would make possible a far greater variety of phonetic symbols than is required for all of the Slav languages combined. In fact, since the marks might also be combined so two or more would be used to mark one letter, the range of such a system could easily be ample for all languages on a phonetic basis.

For composing machines, such as the linotype, which uses type blocks, this system would be the same thing as one involving a large number of characters, because each combination of letter and mark must be taken care of by one kind of type block. However, such machines have more keys than a typewriter; and no doubt could be adapted to this system for the various Slav languages to the extent that their use would be necessary.

Furthermore, for general work, a new kind of composing machine, one of an "accenting" kind, also could be developed. One possibility would be to modify the key mechanisms of present machines. Another would be to have them operate upon the principle of making type impressions upon special multiple layer paper, from which lines of type could be cast, and this is a method which already has been used to some extent. This would be adaptable to marking or accenting the letters, same as the foregoing kind of typewriter, and there are ways of doing this so that "justified" lines of type (having uniform length per line due to varying the word spacings) can result just as with a linotype. Such a machine could have the capacity for a great variety of phonetic symbols.

The designs of type, or letters, not intended for use on the foregoing kinds of machines could, obviously, be worked out with considerable freedom, particularly in the case of special display type. The location and the style of the two kinds of marks, which are needed for a standardized Slav alphabet, could vary considerably from that shown here, and yet remain reasonably clear and easy to interpret. They may be inside of the letters, especially the capitals, like this:  $\mathcal{D}$  equals  $\mathcal{D}$ , or  $\mathcal{C}$  equals  $\mathcal{C}$ , and so on. In

fact, they might be only notches, bevels or marks on the lines of the letters, that is, white marks on the inked areas of the letters. Any arrangement sufficiently suggestive as to its meaning would be satisfactory.

It is not necessary that the markings used in longhand writing be the same as used in printing. The dot and the  $\checkmark$  mark are one pair which might be satisfactory for longhand; but, on the other hand, at least one of these marks could be an extra loop in the letter (or adjacent to the letter) so that the writer would not need to stop to mark so many of the letters.

For example, a soft e might = *e* or *e*

soft a might = *a*

soft n might = *n*

soft l might = *l* or *l*

soft i might = *i*

soft d might = *d* and so on.

Since the h-mark is used with some letters, which, in Slav languages at least, may not need to use the j-mark, the foregoing methods could be used to indicate the h element in such cases, as for example č = *č*

The design of the letters for general use, in printing, must be worked out carefully from the viewpoint of making them easy to read. Inasmuch as that is a job for an artist type designer, it would be well not to try to say very much about it in this discussion. Some of the fundamental principles which the use of the h-marks and j-marks will involve in this connection, however, should be mentioned.

Some people seem to think that an ideal alphabet would be one where the letters would all be of the same height, that is, having no ascenders nor descenders extending beyond the top and bottom levels of the short letters, such as a, e, s, z, etc. However, if we had letters all of which would have ascenders and descenders (or kerns) such an alphabet would, essentially, have the same feature, and there is no doubt it would be very tiresome to read, even if the letters were of simple design. Similarly, pages of only short letters of uniform height, would also be tiresome; because

what is really necessary is the use of both kinds of letters, short ones, and the ones with kerns. The kerns, extending above and below the main portion of the line of letters in an irregular manner, soften the effect of the horizontal lines, and, thereby, make reading easier.

The kerns seem to provide rest points as guide marks for the eyes, in other words; and, as a matter of fact, it is also well known that type having kerns that are too short is difficult to read. As early as the middle ages, letters with shortened kerns have been tried, and they were discontinued for general use each time they were tried. This is because the kerns should be of sufficient length so as to give a printed page a sort of woven appearance in order to avoid being tiresome.

The h-mark and the j-mark could be designed and used in such a manner that they would be something on the order of kerns, and would tend, therefore, to perform the same function as kerns, although this does not mean that their lengths and designs must be just like those of the usual kerns. Marks of this type, directly forming parts of the letters themselves, will not tend to give the objectionable pock-marked appearance to the lines and paragraphs which separate diacritics do.

In the case of capital letters, or more special type, however, these marks may not always really be kerns, for sometimes (as already illustrated) they may not extend above or below the main portions of the letters as kerns do. In such cases they may, nevertheless, represent, or bring about, modifications in the designs of the letters in some such ways as are illustrated by the examples which follow.

One system for marking letters, which would have a great capacity for phonetic symbols, which would be adapted to the "accenting" typewriters and composing machines, and which could fulfill the other requirements for a general-use alphabet, consists of using slant marks, such as the two parts of a  $\vee$  mark. A mark slanting downward from left to right, for example, could represent the assimilated j element, and one slanting upward from left to right could represent the assimilated h element. These marks

are adaptable for use above and below the small short letters in this manner:

è é ê ë

Evidently, these four ways of marking, and the unmarked letter, give five phonetic symbols, which provides for considerable capacity, even if no more than one mark per letter were allowed. Sometimes, however, combinations of these marks could be allowed (for example, for giving phonetic spellings to foreign words rarely used); and such practice would be entirely feasible with these marks, as each one falls in a different quadrant of the letter and there is no interference. The combinations which are possible are as follows:

I. Two marks

ě ě ě ě ě ě

II. Three marks

ě ě ě ě

III. Four marks

ě

A total of sixteen phonetic symbols can be formed from one letter and the various combinations with these marks. Not all of these combinations are usable with some of the letters having kerns, because the kern will sometimes interfere with a mark, prohibiting its use, unless the marks are placed excessively far away from the center lines of the letters. However, there is enough capacity for phonetic symbols in this system, as illustrated here, to take care of all Slavic alphabets, and permit phonetic spellings for foreign words to a considerable extent as well. It is not absolutely necessary that these slant marks be plain slanted

lines (˘ and ˇ) for they may be designed to join up with the letters in various ways, in accordance with what may be found convenient or desirable.

Capital letters might be marked in a manner similar to the foregoing examples; that is, by placing the marks over or under the letters, as follows:

Ě Ě Ě Ě

It is not absolutely necessary that the marks for the capitals be of the same kind, nor that they be located in a similar manner, as those for the small letters. However, there is an advantage in that for typewriters and, in that connection, there are two particular ways of marking capitals, which should be illustrated here; because they provide an additional means of increasing the capacity for phonetic symbols of a system of this kind when used on an "accenting" machine of the kind that has been mentioned.

Capital letters located, as is the most common practice, so that the top of the letter is about as high as the longest kern, and the bottom of the letter is in line with the lower limits of the short small letters could be marked as follows:

Ě Ě Ě Ě

The upper marks fall inside of the letters, as the first two examples show, and the lower marks fall below the letters. It will be evident that these marks are precisely the same, and in the same location, as those already illustrated for marking the small letters. By using longer capitals and locating them so they will extend the same distance above and below the small short letters, these same marks will fall inside of the letters below, as well as above, as for example:

Ě Ě Ě Ě

The advantage in either of the above methods for marking capitals lies in the fact that no shifting of the positions of the marks is

necessary, the same marks usable with small letters are usable for the capitals. Therefore, on a typewriter, four type bars used with no shifting when they are operated, or two type bars used with the usual shift key, can mark both small and capital letters, eliminating the necessity for having separate marks for the two kinds of letters. Using four type bars for marking, in the foregoing manner, would permit the use of four other marks (detached diacritics of some of the kinds now used perhaps) which could be employed through the use of the shift key (the foregoing marks on the letters being made without using the shift key). Evidently, this would enlarge the scope of this kind of a machine for marking or accenting the letters.

The designs of the letters for this kind of a system might be modified slightly in some cases, to considerable advantage; and, also, the height of the capitals could be adjusted to enable the marks to fit properly and be of the desired lengths. The capitals could be shortened somewhat, for example, so as not to extend as far out from the line of short letters as the longest kerns do, if that should be desirable so as to permit using rather short and inconspicuous marks in the foregoing manner.

The following table of letters contains most of the basic, or most important, marked letters needed for the Slav alphabet. It illustrates how this system works, and shows some of the modifications in letter designs that may be convenient. Each letter is given three times: first, the small case design; second, the first form of capital mentioned and illustrated in the foregoing discussion; and third, the second or longer form of capital. The "soft" vowels illustrated represent vowels which have a softening (mouillation or palatalization) effect upon preceding consonants; or, when not preceded by such a softened consonant, which are pronounced with a preceding j-glide. Hard vowels do not indicate these soft pronunciations. The strictly vowel part of the sound is not thought of, in this sense, as being necessarily soft or hard in accordance with this; but, nevertheless, it is very convenient to use these terms for classifying vowels on the foregoing basis of pronunciations.



Soft	e =	è	Е	Е	
Soft	a =	à	А	А	
Soft	i =	ì	І	І	
Soft	u =	ù	У	У	
Soft	y =	ÿ	У	У	
Soft	n =	ŋ	Н	Н	(or Н )
Soft	l =	ł	Л	Л	
Soft	d =	đ	Д	Д	
Soft	t =	ť	Т	Т	
Soft	r =	ř	Р	Р	(Russian soft r)
Normal or Soft	sh =	ś	С	С	(Polish ś)
Normal or Soft	ch =	ć	С	С	(Polish ć)
Normal or Soft	zh =	ź	З	З	(Polish ź)
Coarse	sh =	ś	С	С	(Polish sz)
Coarse	ch =	ć	С	С	(Polish cz)
Coarse	zh =	ź	З	З	(Polish ż)
Czech	ř =	ř	Р	Р	
Polish	rz =	rz	Р	Р	
Hard	y =	Y	У	У	(Polish y, Russian bl)
Hard	l =	ł	Л	Л	(Polish ł)
Nasal	a =	ǣ	А	А	
Nasal	e =	ǣ	Е	Е	
Nasal	u =	u	У	У	
	dž =	đ	Д	Д	(Polish dž, Croatian ğ)

It will be noted that the foregoing list of important marked letters does not give illustrations of vowels of various lengths, nor does it show much in the way of variations in character of sound for vowels. Slav languages are rather simple in these respects, and no such array of "a" sounds, as were illustrated earlier in this chapter in regard to English, need to be kept apart in a phonetic Slav language alphabet.

The letters l and r often serve as "half-vowels." For example, the syllable "per", pronounced with a very short, or with no distinct vowel sound, is written "pr" in Slav orthographies, and similarly for other such cases. There are also some other short vowels of rather indistinct nature, similar to and, in fact, often called "half-vowels", such as a Bulgarian short u. There are, furthermore, some variations in length or quantity which tend to take place more or less automatically. For example, the thin or "narrow" vowel sound "ee" tends to be long, in general; whereas, the thick i sound (like i in *sit*) tends, in general, to be short. Aside from these foregoing variations in quantity, however, Slav languages do not tend to have much variety in vowel lengths; and most cases of such variations occur in the westernmost fringe of Slav nations, and in some Russian inflexional endings.

Likewise, Slavs do not tend to use nasal pronunciations. Except for Polish and Kashube, only traces of nasal sounds are heard in these languages. Furthermore, Slavs do not tend to use the more special "mixed" vowel sounds to any great degree; the hard "y", used mostly by Russians and Poles, being the only important exception. For the foregoing reasons, a standard Slav alphabet need not be greatly involved as far as vowel sounds are concerned, and the capacity of the system proposed here is such that it will readily take care of all vowel sounds in these Slav tongues, individually as well as when taken collectively.

Another matter which should be noted is that all of the letters illustrated are marked only once. Except possibly for phonetically representing some of the more special sounds, in the minor Slav dialects or languages, a thoroughly phonetic system should be and can be developed, based on using no more than

one mark per letter in Slav words. The use of more than one mark per letter should be reserved mostly for foreign sounds, or for representing sounds in Slav words in a more strictly phonetic manner than is necessary for general purposes—as for example, in dictionaries or grammars.

One pertinent case which involves this policy is that of vowels having both a soft as well as a nasal pronunciation. The Polish word *nią* ("her", instrumental case) might be written *nà*, or *nâ*, using the j-mark as well as the h-mark. However, it would probably be best to avoid such practice and use the letter i for indicating the softness of pronunciation in cases of this kind. In that case, this word could be written *niâ* which is the same as the present spelling except for the design of the mark on the letter a.

This proposed method of marking letters is well adapted to letters of the Roman and italic types, as well as to others. A modification of this use of slant lines could be used to good advantage perhaps for letters such as the capitals of the newspaper Gothic type. In this case the slant lines might be placed across the middle of the letters, producing marked letters such as these:

Soft E = <b>E</b>	Nasal E = <b>E</b>
Soft A = <b>A</b>	Nasal A = <b>A</b>
Soft U = <b>U</b>	Nasal U = <b>U</b>
Soft T = <b>T</b>	Soft D = <b>D</b>
Soft I = <b>I</b>	Soft Y = <b>Y</b>

The directions of the slants of the lines for the j-mark and for the h-mark are the same, respectively, as before; and the meanings of the marked letters could be interpreted immediately by one familiar with the previous method. Since there are only two marks (unless four half-length marks are used) the capacity for phonetic symbols is not so great as that of the previous system but, nevertheless, the capacity is ample (perhaps with some special variations) for the uses this would be intended for. It might even be possible to mark the small letters of this so called

Gothic type similarly by locating the marks, for example, at about the level of the horizontal line of the letter e:

Soft e = e

Nasal e = e

Inasmuch as the foregoing marks for the Gothic type fall upon considerable portions of the regular lines of the letter in some cases, this would not be practical on a typewriter where excessive inking would result in spots. But this could work satisfactorily on the accenting composing machine where the lines of type are cast from impressions made by the composing machine.

It will be noted that, in all of the foregoing examples, care has been taken not to use marks of any kind that would run into and cross the lines of a letter at some point or points in such a manner as to end in short stumps or projections at the sides of the crossed lines. This would produce a "fuzzy" appearance and that can be just as objectionable (for general use type) as a pock-marked effect. Both of these objectionable effects can be avoided, however, and without necessarily attaching or joining the marks to the main characters at, or near to, the vertical centerlines of the characters, as has been done in most of the foregoing examples. When not intended for an accenting typewriter, the marks may join up with the letters at various points. One kind of an alphabet, in which this latter practice would be advantageous, would be the alphabets "lettered" (or printed) by hand, as for instance by engineers and architects. The following examples illustrate this kind of variation in the placing of the marks:

Soft i = i

Soft l = l

Soft e = e

Soft a = a

Soft r = r

Soft d = d

Soft n = n

Soft u = u

Employing marks such as the j-mark and h-mark discussed here, to represent certain elements incorporated into the pronunciation of letters, suggests the interesting idea that if this were carried

out as far as possible, we would have a sort of phonetically synthetic system of letters. A few basic characters and a variety of marks to represent all of the various elements in pronunciation, which can be identified in more than one letter, would permit representing each sound by a character, or a character with one or more marks. Letters could be "built up" with the characters and marks so as to be more or less self-explanatory as to pronunciation. Just as a phonetic system of spelling for words is desirable, so would there, also, be some advantages in such phonetically synthetic letters when used internationally as some kind of a standard for comparison of sounds.

One element, for example, which might be designated by another mark in addition to the use of a j-mark and an h-mark, is the "voice" element in the sounds represented by such letters as: b, v, d, z, ž and g. When these sounds are devoiced, which often happens in Slav languages in these particular cases, the results are, respectively: p, f, t, s, š and k. Therefore, the latter with a "voice" mark could be made equal to the previous set, respectively. This does not mean, however, that such a system of letters would be desirable for general use in any language, nor for the Slav languages as one linguistic unit. An international phonetic alphabet covers too much ground, and cannot have the best qualifications for general use in newspapers, books, etc.

One thing which is often done in alphabets is to represent a combination of two, or even more slurred sounds by one letter. In Slav alphabets, the combination ts is represented, for example, by one letter, which is c in the Latinized systems. This is just the opposite procedure from the foregoing synthetic procedure because the single letter does not show the sounds which enter into the combination. However, when such a combination of slurred sounds is used very frequently in a language, there is a practical advantage in having a separate letter for it, and that is the situation with regard to this Slav c sound.

On the other hand, when such a composite sound is heard only rarely, it is best to "spell it out" in detail when available letters in the adopted alphabet can do that properly. This, however,

refers only to slurred composite sounds, and not to single sounds, with probably one or more recognizable elements in them. In the latter case, the proper arrangement is to represent the sound by a single plain letter, or by a marked letter.

The foregoing types of suggested alphabets (using the j-mark and the h-mark) work in a manner, or have a "mechanism", similar to the Cyrillic alphabets with their "soft" and "hard" signs, except that the suggested marks are placed right on the letters instead of adjacent to them. In fact, the j-mark has fundamentally the same meaning as a Cyrillic "soft" sign; but the now more or less obsolescent Cyrillic "hard" sign, has been replaced (in the proposed system) by the h-mark having a different meaning.

It may be that it would be desirable to have a system, in the beginning, that could be introduced easily without involving the introduction of new typing and composing machines. Such a system is possible if sign letters are used (similar to the Cyrillic sign letters) in place of the marks discussed in this chapter. It would be possible to use a j-mark letter and an h-mark letter, placed adjacent to the letters which they are to modify; and, thereby, obtain more or less the same results as with the marks on the letters. The best way of doing that would be to take the simplest character possible (just an i without the dot probably) and add the proposed marks to it to make the sign letters desired. Each combination of this simple character and a mark would represent a sign character, so that  $\dot{\text{j}}$  would be the soft sign character and could be called the j-mark letter; and  $\dot{\text{h}}$  would, similarly, be the h-mark letter.

Placing the j-mark letter behind a consonant would soften the consonant; and this would actually be a more phonetically precise method than is the use of the letter j for that purpose, because the letter j is also used (in present Latinized systems and in the proposed system) to indicate a distinct consonant sound, as for example: ja, je, etc. Indicating a soft pronunciation of a consonant followed by a vowel could be done by placing the soft sign character between them, as for example: d $\dot{\text{j}}$ e=dè. Indicating

ing the blended hissing sounds or nasal vowel sounds could be done by placing the h-mark letter behind the letters affected in this manner: sh or ś=sʃ, and eh or ē=eʃ. Where additional sign characters would be needed, as for instance for indicating a harsh sh sound (for the Polish language), they could be made up in accordance with the principles that have been explained in the preceding discussion, and in this latter case we could have: sz==sʃ.

In order not to have the soft sign letter used an excessive number of times, as would be the tendency in the Eastern Slav languages, it would probably be desirable to resort to the use of soft vowel letters as is done in the Cyrillic alphabets. However, in such cases the new characters, also, should be made by adding the standard marks to the regular letters; so that the system will be very similar to what it would be if the foregoing accenting machines were used. In other words, a soft "e" would be è, a soft "a" would be à, etc.; instead of using an entirely different set of characters for the soft vowels as is now being done in the Cyrillic Systems.

The number of letters in the various Slav alphabets could vary in accordance with their needs, and they could differ in that some might use a mute sign character where others might use a marked form of a regular letter. However, the marks on the letters and on the sign characters would all be standardized so that their meanings would always be clear; and, therefore, the resultant alphabets would promote interchanges of words nearly as much as if a strictly uniform alphabet were used.

To facilitate the use of such interrelated Slav alphabets, the markings on letters in pronouncing dictionaries and grammars in all Slavic countries should be the same, in general, and should be in accordance with the alphabet discussed in detail in the following chapter. The latter is based on using marks or letters primarily, rather than sign letters, and represents a kind of "ultimate" system towards which the trend of changes in all of the modified systems, as suggested in the foregoing discussion, should be directed. The advantages in favor of this ultimate system are: that words tend to be somewhat short, because of the absence of

mute sign letters; and that basic spellings (letters regardless of signs) tend to be similar, which would facilitate interchanges of words throughout the Slavic languages.

However, the fundamental principles in this ultimate system and in the foregoing modified, but interrelated, alphabets are all alike; and, consequently, the same general results would be obtained by using the modified alphabets as if a thoroughly standardized system were in use. The special typewriting and composing machines would not necessarily need to be introduced, however, if the modified alphabets were used, unless or until the "ultimate" system would be in fairly general use.



## CHAPTER IV

### THE PROPOSED ALPHABET

The letters of the English alphabet, developed from the Latin, are a very satisfactory set of characters to use in the proposed standard alphabet for the Slav languages. They are used in most of the important languages of Europe, which makes their use for this purpose exceedingly practical, and there are enough of them to cover the requirements for the proposed system. In fact, Slav languages could probably get along with fewer characters, for in the languages of those Slav nations which have so far adopted the English or Latin system, not all of the twenty-six English letters are being used regularly. For example, the Polish language does not need the v, q and x, while Czechoslovak does not use w, q and x.

There is a continual tendency to adopt foreign words and foreign names in all languages, however, and the unnecessary letters are often used even if they are foreign. Polish and Czechoslovak dictionaries often have given words spelled with some of these extra foreign letters, because it is convenient to do so. This indicates that, after all, there would not be anything worthwhile gained by trying to develop an alphabetic system for the Slav languages based on using the absolute minimum of characters that could be used.

It is better to recognize the fact that the twenty-six English letters are at present used in so many languages that they will all be required, more or less, if for no other purpose than to give

foreign spellings. That being the case, it would actually be best to provide use for each one of these characters in the Slav system so as to give each letter a definite duty, or a place in the standard Slav alphabet, and the alphabet proposed here employs all of the twenty-six letters for this reason.

A statement somewhat similar to the foregoing should be made here in regard to the variety of sounds used in each one of the Slav languages. If a language lacks some sound which is used extensively in various other languages, it can hardly be said that such a situation is a desirable one, and it is better if such a language becomes enriched by foreign words containing the missing sound.

For example, if a language lacks the h-sound, or the l-sound, or some other equally as common sound, we cannot avoid feeling that such a language would be enriched and improved by the introduction of such a sound into it. This of course applies chiefly to what might be considered the common or usual sounds in languages, and not to some exceedingly special sounds.

The American Sioux (Dakota) language, for example, employs some explosive sounds, such as an explosive č; pronounced by first stopping the breath and putting pressure on the air in the lungs, and then pronouncing the sound in an explosive manner. Sounds of such a "trick" character, though not necessarily something to be ashamed of, are not so desirable for absorption by another language, as are some of the more ordinary sounds used in speech.

From this viewpoint, the use of a standard alphabet which could be of service in introducing sounds from some Slav languages to other Slav languages that lack them, is obviously a very desirable proposition. It would tend to enrich and improve the Slav languages, making a linguistic group out of them which would be rich in the variety of standard speech sounds employed.

On the basis of the precedents already established by Slav languages using the Latin system, it is easy to assign a basic sound to each one of the English letters for use in a Slav alphabet, except for letters v, w, q and x. A decision must be made whether

the v sound will be designated by v, as in English and in some Slav languages, or by w as in Polish. Undoubtedly, it would be best to follow English practice in the case of both v and w and assign to v the sound it has in the English word "voice", and to the w the sound it has in the English word "we."

That will make the v in Slav languages identical to the English v, except in Slovene where this sound is pronounced in a way that makes it differ more from an f than English v does. However, the Slovenes use v in their orthography and no distinctions would need to be made between these two kinds of v except perhaps in pronouncing dictionaries.

The English w sound is an important sound that is heard in many languages, although Slavs do not use it very much. It is a sort of a u-consonant similar to the way a j sound is an i-consonant. Some of the Slav dialects employ this sound, and one example, in Slovak, will be mentioned later. It is desirable that this letter be employed, therefore, in a Slav alphabet, and that the spellings be worked out in such a manner that this letter will appear in some Slav words as well as in foreign words.

The letter q is an unnecessary, redundant, letter in English, but it is used extensively in Spanish, French, and other languages. It could probably be assigned the value of a Greek x, although there are various ways the latter sound can be designated in the proposed alphabet. At present, this sound (the sound of ch in the Scotch word "loch") is being represented by ch in Polish, Czechoslovak, and other languages. That is not a bad way of doing it because there does not appear to be any tendency for the h sound to follow the ts sound of Slav c (neither in Slav languages nor in other languages); and, therefore, there is not much chance for lack of clarity in the spelling of words in this manner. Obviously, a mark on the letters h, k or c could, also, clearly indicate this sound. In spite of all these other possibilities, however, we would probably be justified to make q equal to Greek x and thus provide use for the letter q. The Greek x is considered to be a blend of kh, and since q could be considered as a form of k, we would not be inconsistent if we used q for the sound of kh. That is the

procedure, in this proposed alphabet, for Slav words. In foreign words, q might, of course, sometimes be equal to k.

The letter x is another redundant or unnecessary letter in the English alphabet. If this letter will not be used to denote the sound of Greek x, there is a special way in which letter x can be utilized. The combination of soft sounds ść, which occur frequently in Polish, Russian, and other Slav languages, might be denoted by the pair of letters sx, thus providing a duty for x; and at the same time simplifying the writing somewhat, because it would not be necessary to put any marks on this special combination. This is a case, in other words, where a special combination of letters can be used to good advantage to represent sounds which differ from those which the letters generally designate. In foreign words, x could be equal to ks as in English.

Assuming that the foregoing suggestions regarding letters v, w, q and x were to be adopted, the basic sounds of the unmarked letters in the Slav alphabet would be as follows:

- a = a in English *father*
- b = English b
- c = ts in English *cats*
- d = German d
- e = e in English *pet* or *set*
- f = English f
- g = g in English *go*
- h = English h
- i = i in English *machine*; or, ee in English *thee*
- j = y in English *yet*
- k = English k
- l = English l
- m = English m
- n = English n
- o = o in English *form*
- p = English p
- q = Greek x; or ch in Scotch *loch*, or in German *nach*
- r = German r

s = s in English *store*  
 t = German t  
 u = u in English *full*  
 v = English v  
 w = w in English *with* or *we*  
 x = English ks in foreign words. sx = śc in Slav words  
 y = i in English *sit* or *it*; also y = Polish y  
 z = English z

One additional possibility, in regard to selecting letters for a standard Slavonic alphabet, is that of using some of the characters from the Cyrillic system along with the Latin characters, or as substitutes for some of them. Some Latin characters, like g and w, are complex and rather large; whereas, a few of the Cyrillic characters that differ from the Latin are fairly simple and small, like the characters for the l sound (Л) and the g sound (Г). This, of course, is a matter that should be decided by type designers; because it involves the questions of whether the new letters would match, or could be changed to match, with the others; and whether any simpler characters would really be desirable. Actually it would be of no more importance to the Slav alphabet to have such changes made than to the English alphabet; although the making of other extensive changes would, of course, provide a convenient opportunity for making these additional changes also.

In one case, however, there are additional reasons for making a change. The letter j, which has both a kern and a dot, and which would be used often in some of the written Slav languages, would probably tend to produce the effect of a pock-marked appearance, and of an excess of kerns in the lines, both of which can be objectionable, as has been explained. Therefore, it might be advantageous to replace it with a Cyrillic character, or with some other suitable letter. One good arrangement might be to use a small j-like letter (without a dot or kern) in place of the small case letter j, for the i-consonant sound. The capital "J" character could remain the same as it is, so that we would have J and **J** (or probably **Ї**), in place of J and j. The longhand form for the

new small letter might be *ŷ*. It should also be noted, however, that the suggested soft sign letter (at end of the preceding chapter) might be satisfactory, in place of the foregoing, for use in this "ultimate" system.

The small *j*, instead of being discarded, could be used to designate some other, less frequently heard, sound. That might be the *dzh* sound in combinations where the use of a marked *d* letter for it would not yield any worthwhile standardization between the written Slav tongues. This would mean that 27 characters would be employed in the new alphabet instead of only the regular 26 English characters. The Cyrillic character for the *l* sound could probably be used as the capital form of this *j* character (and the small Cyrillic letter of the same kind might be worth considering as an alternate for *j* in some styles of type designs).

This writer feels that such an alphabet (using the 27 characters) would be about the best, but in order to stay in line as much as possible with present day practices in Latinized Slav alphabets, the remainder of this treatise has been worked out on the basis of the 26-letter alphabet as outlined in the preceding discussions.

Variations in the sounds of some of these letters, both in their marked as well as their unmarked forms, will be discussed in greater detail in the remainder of this chapter.

The sounds of letters using the *h*-mark can be discussed most conveniently by starting with those used in the Polish language, because this language employs a very elaborate set of such sounds. In fact, the Polish language is rather remarkable in that it makes the subtle distinctions between the soft hissing sounds, *ć*, *ś* and *ź*, and the hard hissing sounds, *ç*, *ş*, and *ż*, to the extent of definitely indicating these differences in the orthography.

An idea of the differences between these two similar sets of sounds can be obtained by pronouncing the word "schottische". It will be noted that there is a tendency to pronounce the second hissing sound (*sch*) with the tongue a little further back in the mouth than when pronouncing the first one. The first *sch* is pronounced more nearly in the front position of the mouth with the tongue close up to the palate. It has a softer sound, and this

difference between these two sch sounds, which tends to take place automatically in the word "schottische", illustrates the difference between a soft ś and a hard š as used in Polish. The differences between the soft ć and ź and hard ç and ż, respectively, are similar in regard to character of sound and manner of pronunciation.

Polish grammar books call the very soft h-blend hissing sounds "palatal" and the other group "fricative" or "coarse", and both are considered "soft" in relation to normal hard or "sharp" consonants (such as s or z).

Other major Slav language orthographies do not make such definite and complete distinctions in these hissing sounds, although there are some general tendencies in this connection in regard to the character of pronunciations. In Russian, for example, soft ć is heard (never the hard ç), and the hard š and ż are used, changing to the soft styles of these only sometimes when they are long.

The combination ść is a soft sound in Russian, which is designated in the Cyrillic alphabet by one letter called "shcha". Sometimes, Russian pronunciation of this sound varies from the combination ść to a sound very much like a long ś, that is, śś. Both pronunciations, being rather similar, are considered correct. It is this shcha sound, or combination of sounds, used often in some Slav languages, for which the letter combination sx was suggested in the foregoing discussion. In the Bulgarian Cyrillic alphabet, (New and Old Bulgarian) the character that corresponds to the foregoing has the sound value of the combination št in place of the "shcha" sound.

In Polish, both a soft and a hard shcha sound are used, the former being written with diacritics over the letters, similar to ść, and the latter being written szcz. It is the latter combination of letters, appearing often in Polish words and names, which is largely responsible for the notion, in English speaking countries and also in others, that Polish words are extremely difficult to pronounce, and must be more nearly "sneezed" rather than pronounced. The orthography would be simplified an appreciable degree by using sx in place of ść, for this eliminates the two marks,

and also spellings would be simplified a great deal, in Polish, by using *śc* in place of the atrocious *szcz*.

In other Slav languages where distinction between these soft and hard hissing sounds is not being made in the orthographies, it would not be necessary to follow the same practice, as needed in Polish, of indicating softness by placing the *h*-marks above the letters, and hardness, by placing these marks below the letters, as illustrated in the foregoing examples. One of these sets might be chosen, as for instance *ś*, *ć* and *ź*, to indicate these three *h*-combination hissing sounds, regardless of whether they are pronounced hard or soft; and this practice would be satisfactory until such a time, if and when, due to interchanges of words and manners in speaking, some further standardization in orthographies would become desirable. In other words, it is not necessary that complete standardization be attained at present, but it is very desirable that, basically, the same system be used by all Slavs, and that practically complete standardization be established at least in such orthographies as those used in pronouncing dictionaries, which is entirely possible in accordance with the foregoing method. Hereafter, in this discussion, the *h*-marks for letters *c*, *s* and *z*, will be used in the indefinite manner, except in Polish words; and may, therefore, indicate either a hard or a soft sound, depending upon the word and language involved. The approximate sound values of these three hissing sounds can be illustrated as follows:

*ć*=ch as in English *church*

*ś*=sh in English *should* or *sch* in *schottische*

*ź*=z in English *azure* or *s* in *measure*

One (probably unimportant) possibility, regarding the designation of these hissing sounds, is that they might be indicated by using the *j*-mark (in this manner: *č*, *š*, *ž*) in the case of the soft Polish types and the indefinite cases. Precedent for that lies in the fact that the *sh* blended sound is sometimes indicated in some languages (in Dutch, for instance) by *sj*. Extending the use of the *j*-mark in this manner, however, would be feasible, conveniently, only if this mark will not be needed to designate soft types of *s*



and z. That is, if the latter, in accordance with the suggestion in the following discussion, will be indicated by sj and zj when not followed by a vowel; then it would be possible to use the j-mark in place of the h-mark in the foregoing manner

Czech ř is a sound obtained by blending into one sound the combination rzh and for that reason, as already stated, it may be appropriately designated by ř. It is pronounced with the tongue approximately in the position it assumes for pronouncing a German or Slav r. This peculiar soft sound is sometimes devoiced, in which case it becomes a blend of rsh. However, no special letter is used to distinguish this from the voiced variety in the Czech orthography.

The Polish rz is a similar sound, but is pronounced further back in the mouth, because the zh element in this case is the hard Polish ż or, in other words, z. Consequently, we would appropriately designate this sound by ř as already suggested. The Czech ř is very different from zh; but in the Polish rz, the r element is very weak, so that the difference between this sound and Polish ż is small. Both of the latter Polish sounds are approximately like the sound of j in French *jour*.

In Slav languages, the sound resulting from the combination dzh (or dž) is occasionally heard. It is of course the same type of sound as the soft sound of g in English *gem*. In order to simplify the orthography, without using a special letter for this sound, in the proposed system, it would seem that the h-mark on the letter d ought to be satisfactory for this purpose. Therefore, a marked form of this letter (ḡ) has been given among the examples of marked letters, near the end of the preceding chapter, to serve as a symbol for this sound.

Obviously, a marked g could be used instead; but, as the sound ḡ often corresponds in some Slav languages to ḡ in other Slav languages, it is evident that a greater similarity in the written languages will result if a marked d is employed. In the Polish language, however, there are two kinds of this sound. One is soft and represents the combination dž, and the other is more harsh and represents the combination dż.

It would, obviously, be possible to follow the same method as for the Polish hissing sounds already discussed, and designate the soft sound by an h-mark above the letter d, and the harsher form of the sound by using the lower h-mark. However, as the latter is required somewhat rarely, it would probably be just as well to follow the present system, and designate the harsher sound by dz, using a marked d for the soft sound or for the indefinite cases. In fact, employing a marked d, even for the latter uses, is probably one of the least important items suggested here in connection with a standardized Slav alphabet; although it should be noted, nevertheless, that this proposed system is well adapted for simplifying orthography in cases of this kind, if that should be desired.

Discussion of the use of the j-mark can be commenced most appropriately with its application in the Russian language (more specifically, Great Russian), because in this language soft, or palatalized, pronunciation is employed very extensively, and the existing orthography employs an elaborate system for indicating it. Besides the soft vowels, and their softening effect upon preceding consonants, most of the consonants used in Russian can be pronounced either hard or soft when not followed by a vowel, or when in the final position. Furthermore, the soft consonants may be grouped together, without any intervening vowels, to such an extent that some people have been prompted to say that in Russian we not only have soft pronunciation of letters, but that entire syllables are palatalized.

To illustrate what is meant by the foregoing soft pronunciations, for some of which the use of a j-mark will be shown to be very convenient, we may take as an example several ways of pronouncing the syllable *ne*. If these letters are pronounced as in the English *never*, we are using the normal hard sound values for both *n* and *e*. If we were to pronounce this syllable with the same kind of *n*, but with what is called a soft *e*, we would have a combination of sounds which could be represented by *n+je*, the *j* having a sound like *y* in English *yet*.

If we were to pronounce *ne* with a soft *n* so it would sound

the soft way in which *n* is often pronounced in English *new* (or like *gn* in some languages), we would have something like *nj+e* where the *n* and *j* are blended together. In pronunciations of this kind, the tongue is raised up to the palate as for pronouncing the vowel *i* and the consonant is then pronounced simultaneously with a *j*-glide, which ties the consonant to the following vowel.

There is yet another palatalized way of pronouncing such pairs of letters; and that, in the above example, would be with a soft *n*, as in the last case, and a soft *e* as in the preceding example, with just a slight pause or separation between them. Such a pronunciation, in other words, is something like *nj+je*.

All four of the above ways of pronouncing a consonant and a following vowel are encountered in Slav languages. In addition to that, the consonant may be pronounced in the foregoing soft manner when not followed by a vowel; which, it may be stated, is easy enough to accomplish for western Europeans, if it is *n* or certain other consonants, but which is quite difficult in the case of some consonants. Usually, in this kind of palatalized pronunciation, a fairly distinct *j*-glide is heard after the consonant; and there may, also, be an on-glide as well as this off-glide. On the other hand, the *j*-glide may be totally absent, although the tongue is brought up so as to affect a soft palatalized pronunciation under certain conditions.

The best way to indicate the softness of pronunciation, when a soft consonant followed by a vowel are involved, is to make the *j*-mark on the vowel (thus: *nè*) and not on the consonant; because the small vowels are all short letters (except *y*) and they are, therefore, somewhat better adapted to being marked. Furthermore, most cases of soft pronunciation are of this kind, a consonant followed by a vowel, and by arranging to indicate soft consonants in other combinations with the use of the letter *j*, in some cases at least, it is possible in this manner to avoid having too great a total variety of letters with soft marks.

On the proposed "accenting" typewriters, any letter could be marked just about as readily as any other letter, so far as the operation itself is concerned; but as some printing will always be

done, more or less, by setting type by hand, it is obviously desirable not to adopt a system requiring too great a variety of letters with marks—for the Slav words at least. In the proposed system, therefore, such soft combinations as  $nj+e$  will be written  $n\grave{e}$ . The cases where a hard consonant is followed by a soft vowel ( $n+je$ ) will be written  $nje$ , which is more or less in accordance with practices at present followed in many languages. The  $j$  in the latter case "separates" the soft vowel from the consonant. The combinations like  $nj+je$  can be written like  $nj\grave{e}$ , or like  $n\grave{e}$ —although the latter is only possible if the consonant is one of those the soft style of which will be indicated by a  $j$ -mark rather than by the letter  $j$  itself ( $nj$ ).

In the Russian language, two sets of vowels are used, the hard vowels, which do not soften a preceding consonant, and the soft ones, which soften preceding consonants, as in the foregoing example ( $n\grave{e}$ ). In addition to that, a "soft mark" is used after consonants sometimes to indicate they are pronounced in the palatalized style. In the proposed system, the  $j$ -mark on a vowel will indicate softness, so that an extra vowel letter will not be needed. For example, the letter  $e$  will be a hard vowel, and  $\grave{e}$  will be the soft style of that same vowel; and similarly for others, if they can be soft. This eliminates the use of extra letters for the soft vowels.

The letter  $j$  can be used in much the same way as the Russian "soft mark", which is an extra letter and not an actual mark on other letters. In addition to this, however, several of the consonants would be well adapted to being marked with the  $j$ -mark to indicate softness in some instances, and thus improve the orthography somewhat further by reducing the use of the letter  $j$  for this purpose. It can be seen from this that the proposed system is similar, in general principles and in capacity for variety, to the Russian Cyrillic system; but that it uses a smaller number of basic characters, and results in a simpler and better orthography in general.

Separation of the consonants into two groups, one of which will use the  $j$ -mark to show softness when not indicated by a fol-

lowing vowel, and the other of which will employ the letter *j* for this purpose, can best be made on the basis of putting into the first group those which conform the most prominently with these requirements:

1—Distinctiveness of the soft pronunciation. That is, whether a word with such a soft sound seems to be different enough from what it would be if the same letter were pronounced in the normal manner, so as to make the soft sound of the letter deserve the somewhat special phonetic symbol of a letter with a mark. This applies particularly to the sound when final, or when not followed by a vowel. When followed by a vowel, the soft pronunciation of the combination is always very distinctive.

2—Tendency to retain the *j*-glide in combinations. In some combinations, some of the soft consonants lose their *j*-glides; and, thereby, they lose distinctiveness to such an extent that the matter of whether the consonant is, or is not, palatalized could be considered as only a small variation in style of speech, not deserving any special orthographic designation. In this connection, it may be stated that palatalized consonants in general, except *t* and *d*, tend to lose their *j*-glides when they stand before other consonants. This tendency in Russian applies even to consonants in final position when followed by words that begin with certain consonants.

3—Whether the soft consonant is usually pronounced without a *j*-glide (which makes use of letter *j* inappropriate) when in final position, and whether its sound is distinctive in such a case.

4—Whether the soft pronunciation of the consonant is frequently heard, in Slavic and other languages.

On the basis of the foregoing items, the letter *n* should have its palatalized pronunciation indicated by the *j*-mark because this soft sound of the letter is very distinctive; and it is used extensively, not only in Slav languages in general, but often also in non-Slav tongues.

The letters *d* and *t* could, also, appropriately have their soft style of pronunciation indicated by the *j*-mark, because they are

frequently heard in Slav languages, and to some extent, also, in others; and they do not as frequently lose their j-glides as other consonants do, so that they tend to be very distinctive in various combinations of letters.

Soft d sounds like the d in the English word *dew* when pronounced in a soft way. Soft t sounds like t in the English word *tune* when pronounced in a soft way. (Not all English speakers, however, use the soft pronunciations in these cases.)

The letters l and r also could be appropriately marked with the j-mark to indicate softness in the situations we are at present discussing. These two consonants differ from the others, when palatalized, in that they are often pronounced that way without a j-glide when final, so that the use of a j to indicate softness would not really be very accurate because this letter fundamentally indicates a j-glide. They are, also, fairly distinctive so that the suggested procedure is justified. A soft l is heard often in Slav languages, and occasionally also in other tongues. It sounds like the l sound in the English word *million*, and an idea of what this letter sounds like in final position may be gained by stopping the pronunciation of this word just after ll when ready to start the following i sound. The soft r is a rather special Slavic sound. It represents a combination of the i sound and a Slav r pronounced, or blended, together. This soft (or Russian) *ɹ̣*, Polish *ɹ̣*, Czech *ř* are all very difficult sounds to learn to pronounce for western Europeans.

Other consonants, which in Russian may be given the palatalized pronunciation when not followed by a vowel, are: s, z, b, f, m, p and v. It would probably be satisfactory to indicate this softness of pronunciation in all of these cases with the letter j, when not otherwise indicated.

In the case of m and p, as a matter of fact, the sounds do not differ appreciably from ordinary pronunciations, even if palatalized, unless a j-glide follows. The j-glide, in other words, is necessary to make the soft style of these two letters sound different from normal. The other letters of this group can be pronounced in such a way, when palatalized, that they are distinguishable

from the normal style. In any case, however, it would be feasible to denote palatalized pronunciations of these letters, wherever desired and not otherwise indicated, by using the letter *j* in the same way the Russian "soft mark" is being used at present. Incidentally, it might be pointed out that palatalized forms of *b*, *f*, *m*, *p* and *v* tend to occur without *j*-glides only in positions in which non-palatalized sounds for these letters do not occur, and these positions are when they are followed by *pj*, *bj*, *mj*, *fj*, *vj* and fricative *j*. (Ref.: "Pronunciation of Russian" by M. V. Trofimov and Daniel Jones.)

The foregoing system, including the use of the *j*-mark to indicate a soft vowel (and its effect upon a preceding consonant that can have a soft pronunciation or the pronunciation of which may be considered as being softened by such a vowel), will completely take care of the needs of all Slav languages so far as palatalized pronunciations are concerned.

In accordance with the foregoing discussion, and taking into consideration some additional items, the uses for the *j*-mark and for the letter *j* are summarized in the following outline:

#### *Uses of the j-Mark*

- 1—To indicate a soft vowel when it softens a preceding consonant (except when it does that automatically), as for instance: *nj*+*e* equals *nè*
- 2—To indicate a soft consonant when it is separated from a following soft vowel and the consonant is one of the group (preferably *n*, *t*, *d*, *l* and *r*) which may be marked for softness, as for instance: *nj*+*je* equals *nè*.
- 3—To indicate a soft vowel when preceded by another vowel in inflexional endings, such as: *aà*, *àà*, *ùù*, etc. The Western and Southern groups of Slav languages do not use adjective endings of double vowels of this kind; and the Eastern Slav languages will be somewhat more similar, in their written form, to the others, if the above method is followed, rather than by writing *aja*, *àja*, etc., in such cases. There probably would be other

situations where similarity of the languages or dialects, in written form, could be increased by such practices. There is, for example, a class of words in the Croatian je-subdialect in which the combination ije appears, and corresponds to long e in the words of the Serbian e-subdialect. Obviously, the former letter group ije could be written iè to make the words appear more like the words of the latter class.

- 4—To indicate a soft consonant, the softness of which is not otherwise indicated, when the consonant is one of the group (preferably n, t, d, l and r) which may be marked for softness of pronunciation, as for example: dèŋ (day).

#### *Uses of the Letter j*

- 1—To indicate a soft vowel when in the initial position, or when preceded by another vowel; except in those cases where this is done for a special purpose with the j-mark as suggested in item 3 of the preceding set of rules. For example, the Slav word for "I" should be written ja and not à in accordance with this rule. The use of the consonant j seems appropriate in cases of this kind, because the pronunciation corresponds to such a spelling, and the j-mark is intended more specifically, on the other hand, for indicating the softening effect of the vowel upon a preceding consonant.
- 2—To separate a soft vowel from a preceding consonant that is given a hard pronunciation thus: n+je equals nje.
- 3—To indicate a soft consonant, the softness of which is not otherwise indicated, when the consonant is one of the group (preferably s, z, b, f, m, p and v, in Russian) which may have softness of pronunciation indicated in this way, as for instance: lèzj (climb).
- 4—To indicate a soft consonant when it is separated from a following soft vowel, and the consonant is one of the



group (preferably s, z, b, f, m, p and v, in Russian) which may have softness of pronunciation indicated in this way, as for instance: pj+je equals pjè.

- 5—To serve for an i-consonant in any other situation where it may be needed for that purpose. In this connection, it is probable that Eastern Slavs would tend to prefer to use a short i (or y) in place of j after vowels, as for example: boi instead of boj (battle). They usually pronounce the i or y sound in this position as a vowel, and not as a consonant, although in other Slav languages, now using the Latin system, the letter j is used.

While complete standardization in such cases is not really so important a matter as some of the other items suggested in this discussion, it would naturally be a good thing to have the spellings conform to a uniform practice, even if that would mean that a j would sometimes serve for a short vowel.

- 6—To serve as a short i and a short y in positions (or at least in most of the positions) where the Eastern Slav languages now use the normal vowels of these kinds with a "short mark" over them. One such case is in the inflexional ending consisting of a normal y followed by a shortened y, which ought to be written yj (used in Ukrainian). Another is the similar case of a normal i followed by a shortened i which ought to be written ij.

The use of the letter j for these foregoing and similar purposes will eliminate the necessity of having special letters for short vowels of the i and y type. Where j would not seem appropriate, the regular vowel letters (i or y) should be used without any special markings on them.

The uses for the j-mark and the letter j have been explained here more or less directly from the viewpoint of applying this system to Russian. In other Slav languages, wherever any one of the

consonants n, d, t, l and r are softened, the softening should be similarly indicated by a marked following vowel, or by the j-mark on the consonant, as has been explained. Softening of any other consonant, when not automatic, and when not otherwise indicated, should be indicated by the letter j, in the foregoing manner.

Soft vowels of the kind discussed, in this same connection, should be indicated in general by the j-mark, or by the letter j, as has been explained. Even the letter pair ni, which is given the soft pronunciation by Slavs more generally than any other pair of such letters, should be written ni<sup>j</sup> when soft, so that the system will be completely flexible in this matter, and will not depend upon letter combinations, or sequences, to indicate softness of pronunciation, except as has been outlined here.

Although Great Russian employs a large variety of palatalized pronunciations for consonants, there are some consonants which are considered soft in some situations in the other Slav languages that are always considered hard in Russian in similar positions. The softness of such consonants can, of course, be indicated by a following marked vowel, or when necessary, by the letter j in the manner explained for soft Russian consonants. In other words, it should be noted, this proposed system is directly applicable to each one of the Slav languages by making the appropriate substitution of letters and marks for those now used, regardless of the fact that these languages vary in vocalization, in grammatical inflexions, and in orthographic systems.

A palatalized consonant often influences the pronunciation of a hard preceding vowel by causing the on-glide already mentioned in this discussion. For example, the word for Czar (or Tsar) in Russian is Car, pronounced something like Cair. The "soft sign" in the Russian Cyrillic system, which indicates the softness of the consonants like the r in this word, is considered as replacing what once was probably a short vowel like a short i. This vowel moved forward and become assimilated by the consonant, resulting in the palatalized pronunciation, and in some cases it is now moved forward so as to be heard slightly in front of the consonant, as in the foregoing case. This is what the Germans call the i-vorschlag.

(The function of the "soft sign" is performed by the letter j or by the j-mark, in the proposed system.)

There is, also, a somewhat similar letter, formerly used extensively in the Russian Cyrillic system, which was called the "hard sign" because it indicated a hard consonant. This was used in positions where, formerly, there may have been a short u sound (as in English *but*), which became mute, but which slightly affected the preceding consonant by giving it a hard pronunciation. This "hard sign" was discontinued for this use in Russian in 1918. The foregoing suppositions, as to the sounds which these two "signs" could be considered as displacing, are based on comparisons with Old Bulgarian, where in the Cyrillic system, these same letters represent somewhat indistinct short vowels (ǐ and ŭ, respectively), which are almost like half-vowels.

In Russian, pronunciation has always been the same as it is now in regard to these symbols, insofar as we know. In the transition from Old Bulgarian to Modern Bulgarian, however, changes have taken place; in fact, spellings have become confused so that some words are spelled with either one or the other of these two symbols.

In Modern Bulgarian, these symbols generally indicate a short u sound when initial or when within a word, and a mute hard sign when final. In the proposed system, a short or half-vowel sound of this kind could be indicated by the letter w just as appropriately as the short high pitch vowel i can be indicated, in some cases, by j in accordance with the foregoing recommendations. If it were considered desirable to continue having the other, second, symbol for this (which is used much less frequently in Bulgarian orthography) it would probably be satisfactory to use the h-mark without any letter at all with it. On this basis, the spellings for the word "am" (which is one of those that have been spelled both ways) would be: swmw and s'm' respectively. (The Bulgarian dialects and orthography are thoroughly discussed in a German Book, "Geschichte der Bulgarischen Sprache," by Stefan Mladenov.)

It is evident from the foregoing that, in some respects, Bul-

garian spellings would not match with those of other Slav languages so very well, on the proposed basis, unless some determined effort were made to bring about simplification and standardization. To those Slav speakers, in whose languages half-vowels are not ordinarily represented by any regular vowel letters, it would probably seem that the spelling of the foregoing word should be *sm*. However, regardless of whether the proposed change would be made so as to follow present Bulgarian spellings strictly, or whether they would undergo extra modifications, the proposed system is as desirable for this language as for the other Slav languages. Palatalized pronunciations (not used by Bulgarians as often as by other Slavs) should, of course, be indicated in the same manner as suggested here for the other Slav languages.

To indicate the relative lengths of vowels, that is, variations in quantity and not in quality, is often one of the things a phonetic alphabet system is required to do. A good example of such a case is the Czech written language, in which the following long vowels are used: *á, é, í, ó, ú, û, and ý*. There is no difference in the sound of *ú* and *û*, the former in general being written at the beginning of a word to represent the long oo sound (as in English pool) and the latter being generally used within a word to represent the same sound. Likewise *í* and *ý* are the same, except that the former is used after definitely soft or neutral consonants, and the latter is used after definitely hard or neutral consonants. In fact, this distinction in the way of using *í* and *ý* (and, similarly, also *i* and *y* for the thick *i* sound) is a way of indicating softness and hardness, respectively, in Czechoslovak for these particular sounds. The sound of *é* ordinarily is not very different from normal *e*, and likewise *ó* is not very different from normal *o*. Therefore, in Czech, on the basis of the proposed alphabet, it would actually be necessary to distinguish only between long and short *a*, and long and short *u*. The high vowel *í* (or *ý*) is always long in Czech, and would not need any special designation because it is *i* in the proposed orthography. The differences between long and short *e* and *o*, respectively, would not need to be taken into account in the orthography; because these differences are small,

and it is best to follow the English system, in such cases, and leave off all markings or means of indicating the differences.

As a matter of fact, pronunciations tend to vary, not only among various speakers, but they also vary with the rate or speed of speaking for the same person. It is, therefore, desirable that a phonetic alphabet be not too precise, especially in regard to lengths of vowels. Long vowels, such as the foregoing *á* and *ú* could be indicated by marks in the proposed alphabet, because the capacity of the system is sufficiently large to permit this. They might also be indicated by double letters (*aa* and *uu*) as is done in the Dutch language, for example, in these particular cases. Or, better still, such doubling might be resorted to only when needed to distinguish between words which, without that, would sometimes be identical in spelling, as for instance, Czech *ř a d* (rows, genitive) and *ř a a d* (lodge or order, nominative).

In comparison with English, a language using an orthography which would be quite definite in regard to character or quality of sound, and which would completely disregard variations in quantity, could be considered as being comparatively easy to learn to read and to spell. Variations in length of vowels, in other words, are not so important as matters pertaining to quality; and could be disregarded, partly or completely, if that should become desirable in order to add or make available new sounds, and at the same time keep from having too much marking done on the letters. When marks are used to denote slight variations in quantity, as in the case of the Czech long *e* and *o* vowels, readers ordinarily do not pay any attention whatsoever to such marks or diacritics.

Long consonants, such as for instance a long *r*, which is heard in some Slav tongues, could probably be indicated most satisfactorily by doubling the letter, as has been suggested for long vowels. However, a "long mark", if adopted for vowels, could also serve for indicating long consonants wherever that would be convenient.

Slav languages differ considerably in accents. Czechs accent the first syllable of each word; whereas, the others employ a variety of ways of accenting, all of which involve stress accents, ex-

cept in the case of Serbo-Croatian. The latter uses pitch as well as stress, and four different accents are employed, namely: a long rising accent, a short rising accent, a long falling accent, and a short falling accent. As is usual in other languages, accent marks are ordinarily not used in the written Slav languages, except in grammars and dictionaries. They are, therefore, no special problem in connection with the proposed alphabet; and, in fact, it may be pointed out that this proposed system, due to its large capacity for phonetic symbols, would be more adaptable for the employment of accent marks in connection with written languages, in general, than any other system now in use.

There are three types of l sounds in the Slav languages. One of these is the ordinary l like the German or English kind. Another is a clear or soft l, which has already been discussed. The third is a dark or hard l, pronounced by pressing the tip of the tongue against the teeth or palate. This l tends to sound a great deal like a w; and, in fact, in some positions in some of the Slav languages and dialects, the w sound replaces this hard l sound.

The orthography used for any one of the Slav languages does not distinguish between all of these three l sounds, however, although in Ukrainian and Bulgarian all three sounds are said to be used. The proposed alphabet can indicate all of them readily, but it probably would not be necessary, at present, to employ more than two phonetic symbols for the l sounds in any one of the Slav languages. Those languages which now require a special way of indicating a soft l would use the means already discussed for indicating it, and they could use a plain l for the other l sounds. Those, like Polish, which need or could advantageously use a marked hard l, would use the symbol ʎ for that sound, and a plain l for the others. Such procedure would be identical with present practices in regard to l sounds in these languages.

Among the examples of marked letters, near the end of Chapter III, is a hard y indicated with the lower j-mark on y. The sound which this phonetic symbol (ȣ) designates, is a high, narrow, mixed vowel; somewhat like a combination of i and u, except that the lips are not rounded like they are when pronouncing

German ü. This hard y appears to be a typically Slav sound, although it is now used chiefly in Polish, Sorbian and Russian. In Polish, the letter y could probably continue to represent this sound as at present. In languages like the Eastern Slav group (taken as a unit) where this sound is mixed with the thick i sound, the latter ought to be designated by y and the hard y should be marked as suggested.

The differences between the sounds represented by i, y and x can be illustrated by first pronouncing the English ee sound (which corresponds to i) alternately several times with the sound of i in it (which corresponds to y). When this is done carefully, it can be noted that the tongue is slightly relaxed and drawn backwards for the y sound as compared to its position for the i sound. By continuing this backward movement a great deal further and again making the tongue tense, as for i, the hard x sound is produced. After the lip consonants (p, b, f, v and m), there is a tendency for a slight w sound to be heard before this sound so that mx (we) tends to sound a little like mwee, vx (you) like vwee, etc. The sound of y in English *rhythm* and of i in English *zinc* approximate this hard x sound.

In the Slovak dialects, the vowel ô is used, which is like the wo in the English word *won't*, although sometimes the w element is so very weak that the sound tends to become a long o. This situation affords the opportunity to make use of the letter w which, as already pointed out, would be desirable at least in some of the Slav words; and in Slovak words, the foregoing vowel ought to be replaced either by a long o (or ou), or by wo, as would be appropriate. The use of a special symbol for a composite slurred sound, such as this ô, is not desirable, especially in this case, because it is employed only rarely, and the sound could just as well be spelled out in detail.

There is less objection to using a phonetic symbol for a composite slurred sound, if it is commonly used, or if used in many languages, so that a greater degree of usefulness is obtained from it. This might apply, for example, to the English long vowels ô, â, etc., which sounds are found in Slav languages to some extent.

and which are often used in other languages. In Slav languages, such of these as are combination sounds, are usually (although not always) spelled out phonetically, so that *ā* equals *ei* or *ej*, etc.

This is the best way, but in some cases special symbols for such sounds are employed. Slovak has, in addition to *ô*, the English type long vowel *ó* for instance, and it might be that the use of some vowels, marked to indicate these "long" sounds, could be permitted in connection with this new system; provided, of course, that the more important kinds of markings, such as those already discussed in connection with the typical *h*-combination sounds and palatal sounds, will not be interfered with thereby.

The best way of settling such questions will be for some Pan-Slav conference to decide first upon the markings to be used for the principle items most common to the Slav languages as a whole. Then the more local groups could decide upon the more specific items pertaining to their particular Slav language or dialect.

Nasal pronunciations are not extensively used in Slav tongues, as a general rule, although there is one exception to this, namely, the Kashube language. In this language, any vowel sound can have a nasal pronunciation; and, also, there are the three special vowels *ö*, *oe* and *ü*. However, there is no doubt that the proposed alphabetic system can take care of just as many or more of these, on a phonetic basis, as are now being indicated, definitely, by phonetic symbols in the orthography.

In the less important Slav languages, such as this one, even the use of pairs of letters for single sounds, if done to follow an established practice, could be considered permissible. It is the principle Slav tongues, such as Russian and Polish, which should, so to speak, set the pace in determining the general Slav alphabetic practices. The alphabet letters and markings should be worked out in such a manner, for these important languages, that they will be as completely clear, phonetically, as is possible from a practical viewpoint. The less prominent Slav tongues should follow such practices in general, and they should deviate from



them, in accordance with their own peculiar requirements, as little as possible.

The Polish language has a nasal a and a nasal e, and there are, also, traces of nasal pronunciations in some of the other Slav tongues. Bulgarian, for example, has a nasal u sound.

The Slovene language is said to have a fairly large variety of vowel sounds, although the orthography is simple and, therefore, it is somewhat non-phonetic. It is doubtful that much greater phonetic clarity would be desired, in cases of this kind, when changed to the new basis; except when it would be obtained through the use of added phonetic symbols also needed and used in the other Slav languages. In other words, consideration should, in general, be given to past practices, as well as to general needs for the Slav languages as a whole, when determining the phonetic symbols for each one of the more minor languages.

It does not seem necessary, nor would it be advisable, to try to give a complete list of phonetic symbols for all Slav languages and dialects in this discussion in view of the foregoing. A kind of a general guide, based on the symbols already illustrated, may be outlined, however, as follows:

- 1—On vowels, the upper j-mark (è) should in general indicate a soft vowel sound except in special cases.
- 2—On vowels, the lower h-mark (e) should indicate a nasal vowel except in special cases.
- 3—On vowels, the lower j-mark (ę) should probably designate a mixed or special vowel sound.
- 4—On vowels, the upper h-mark (é) could indicate long vowels, or something special.
- 5—On consonants, the lower or upper j-mark may indicate a palatalized pronunciation (ċ) at least in the cases of n, d, t, l and r.
- 6—On consonants, the lower or upper h-mark should in general indicate an h-combination sound (š or ś).

Other uses of the marks on consonants, and the use of more than one mark per letter, should pertain to more special sounds.

## CHAPTER V

### SPECIAL COMMENTS

The proposed standard alphabet for Slav languages has been discussed, in a general way, in the preceding chapters; and in this last chapter, concerned with some miscellaneous and special comments, it is appropriate to show some examples of actual adaptations of this alphabet to several of the written Slav tongues. This will illustrate the capability of the proposed system to spell Slav words more clearly and simply, and to bring to light the similarities of the Slav languages in their written forms.

For the foregoing purpose, it will be very convenient to use a group of transcriptions and transliterations, by Nigrin, of the introduction to the Lord's Prayer, which the writer has taken the liberty to copy out of "Czech Grammar" by O. Stěpánek.

These short examples are given here first in their original (or Nigrin's) orthography, the Czech and Polish being in the standard Latin alphabets used for these languages, and the others being transliterated from Cyrillic into similar Latinized equivalents. Three of these examples will be repeated farther on in the proposed system, to show the changes which that will bring about.

Even in their original form, these examples admirably illustrate the relationships of the Slav languages. It will be noted that the Bulgarian example seems somewhat strange in comparison with the others, which is due to its divergence from the others in grammar chiefly. The endings -to and -ta, for example, are prominent on some of the Bulgarian words. These are post-articles

which correspond to the English definite article "the." Bulgarians, in other words, say *sky—the* instead of *the—sky*, and this particular grammatical feature is also found in the non-Slav Roumanian and Albanian languages. Traces of it (in the nominative case only) are also found in other Slav languages.

In general, Slav languages do not seem to have had articles originally, and the foregoing examples are considered to be adaptations from some old barbaric language, spoken formerly in the Balkan peninsula regions.

The Old Slavic example represents the Old Bulgarian, from which, or from some related dialects of which, the Modern Bulgarian language developed as has already been mentioned. This change in the language, which took place in the period from the ninth century (A.D.) to the present time, clearly illustrates the fact that languages do not "stay put", but that they are undergoing continual evolution.

We might well ask the question: If the Old Bulgarian language was due to change in the manner it did change, of what significance was any loyalty that the old Bulgarian people had to their language, as against any one of the other closely related Slav languages, in view of the fact that their old language has now passed out of use, and its place is taken by a language more different from the original than are any of the other related Slav tongues? This question is indeed a pertinent one to consider, especially for Slav autonomists and separatists who are all displaying more or less fanaticism over some certain Slav dialect or language.

The following is the first group of examples mentioned in the foregoing discussion:

CZECH: Otče náš, kterýž jsi v nebesích, posvět' se  
jméno tvé. Přijď království tvé; bud' vůle tvá,  
jako v nebi tak i na zemi.

POLISH: Ojcze nasz, który jest w niebie, świeć  
się imię twoje, przyjdź królestwo twoje, bądź woła  
twoja jako w niebie tak i na ziemi.

RUSSIAN: Otěc naš kotorj jesi na něbesach; da  
svjatit'sja imja tvojo; da prid'ot cárstvo  
tvojo, da budet' volja tvoja kak na něbesach  
i na zemli.

SERBIAN: Oče naš koji si na nebesima, de se sveti ime  
tvoje; da dodje carstvo tvoje; da bude volja tvoja,  
i na zemlji kao na nebu.

BULGARIAN: Tatko ny kojto si v nebe-to, neka da se  
svjati ime-to tvoje, da dojde carstvo-to tvoje;  
da bude volja-ta tvoja kakto na nebe-to, taka i na  
zemja-ta.

OLD SLAVIC: Otče naš, iže jesi na něbesěch, da  
svjatitsja imja tvoję, da priidět carstvie tvoję;  
da bűdět volja tvojá jako na nebesi i na zemi.

To illustrate the simplifications and standardizations which the use of the proposed alphabet can bring about in the foregoing sample orthographies, the Czech, Polish, and Russian examples will now be repeated in the new system. Probably the principal changes for the reader to keep in mind are that Polish *cz* and *sz* are replaced by *ç* and *ş*, respectively, and that palatalized pronunciation of a consonant and vowel will be indicated by marking the vowel instead of by interposing the letter *i* in between them, as is now done in Polish.

Other important changes are that: Polish *w* equals *v* in the new system; Czech *í* and *ý* equals *ǐ* and *i*, whereas, Czech *i* and *y* equal *ỳ* and *y*, respectively; and that *ch* in the foregoing examples equals the *q* in the new system.

All marks pertaining to the lengths of vowels are omitted in these following examples:

CZECH: Otče naš, kteríž jsy v nebesiq, posvět se  
jmeno tve. Pfyjd kralovstvi tve; buď vule tva;  
jako v neby tak y na zemy.

POLISH: Ojce naś, ktory jest v nèbè,  
śvèc śe imię tvoje, przyjd krolestvo tvoje, bądź  
voja tvoja jako v nèbè tak i na źemi.

RUSSIAN: Otèc naś kotòt jesi na nèbesaq; da  
svàtitsà imà tvoje; da pridèt carstvo tvoje,  
da budèt volà tvoja kak na nèbesaq i na zèmlì.

A great decrease in the conspicuousness of diacritics, especially in the Czech example; a great increase in similarity between Polish and Czech; and, considerable increase in similarity of the Russian example to the other two,—are evident in the foregoing examples. The latter effects would be even more pronounced if some vernacular words were injected into the picture. For example, many Czechs say *tvoje* instead of *tve*, and often also instead of *tva*, which changes, of course, would make these Czech and Polish examples look merely like examples of dialects of one language, rather than like examples of two separate languages.

In this connection, it will be noted that *tvojo* in the previous Russian example is written *tvoje* in the latter one. The former is a purely phonetic spelling, whereas, the latter corresponds better to the present Russian orthography on a "letter for letter" basis. At present the letter used for a soft o in Russian is *ë* (pronounced jo), which is usually written *e*.

The foregoing word (which means "your", singular) is spelled *tvoe*, when in neuter gender, and is pronounced *tvojo*. The practice of writing a soft *e* for the *jo* sound in such instances really happens to be a good one, as the spellings correspond more to those of corresponding words in the other Slav languages, and probably this policy should be continued. In such a case, the spelling, on the new basis, would be *tvoje*, as indicated in the sample, because plain *e* is a hard vowel on the new basis, and a soft *e* must be either *je* or *è*, the former being better in this case because the spelling for the word becomes more standardized.

Another case where non-phonetic spelling is employed in Russian, and might be advantageously continued in modified

form, is that of the genitive ending *go*, which in Russian is pronounced *vo*. For example, the word for "his" or "its" is *jego*, pronounced *jevo*. This situation does not achieve much similarity to other Slav languages, but if these *go* endings were spelled *ho*, and if both pronunciations *vo* and *ho* were considered satisfactory, a great improvement would be affected. The *ho* pronunciation corresponds to Ukrainian (*joho*), Southern Russian, and some other Slav languages; and the *vo* pronunciation would be none the less phonetically represented than at present. On such a basis, the foregoing word should be spelled *jeho*.

The examples just discussed show that there would be a difference, when changing to a new basis of this kind, between making the change on a purely phonetic basis, or on a symbol for symbol basis, because not all present Slav orthographies are strictly phonetic. Some, like Czech, Serbian and Polish, are very phonetic; others, like Russian are phonetic in general, but they have somewhat more numerous non-phonetic spellings. To take an additional example, the word for "what" which is pronounced *što*, is spelled *što* in Russian. It would probably be convenient, when changing to a new alphabet, to make revisions in spellings to place them on a more phonetic basis, at least in the cases of some words like this last example.

On the other hand, non-phonetic spellings might be more desirable in some other situations, due to the greater degree of standardization with other Slav languages which they would bring about, as in the other, preceding example. However, the number of such non-phonetic spellings, in any Slav language, should not be increased beyond the degree to which they now exist in the present orthography; except, perhaps, insofar as indication of quantity (or lengths of sounds) is concerned.

The proposed system would tend to make it easy to transliterate from one language to another. In that connection, attention may be called to Nigrin's spelling of *zèmlji*, in the Russian language, which he gives as *zemli*. This is either an error or a misprint, because the Russian spelling and pronunciation in plain Latinized equivalents are, more nearly, *ziemlji*.

Besides simplification and standardization of orthographies, another needed matter, which Slav nations should not overlook, is the simplification and standardization of grammars, wherever possible. Obviously, this is a field in which possibilities for quick results may necessarily be much more limited than in the standardization of alphabets; but, occasionally, an opportunity for achieving improvements is certain to develop.

One such opportunity, which now exists, pertains to the masculine, feminine and neuter forms of the pronoun "they", which (disregarding palatalization markings) tend to be *oni*, *one*, and *ona*, respectively, in the Slav languages. However, these words are not strictly standardized in the written languages. For example, the first (*om*) serves for the neuter as well as for the masculine form in Russian, and there are other variations in the other Slav tongues. In ordinary speech, many Slav speakers employ *oni*, just as in English there is only one word, "they." The Russian Soviet Government has decreed, among other changes, that *om* shall be used exclusively, as this kind of third person plural pronoun, and similar action ought to be taken, in this connection, in respect to all Slav languages.

In the foregoing case, the strict spelling of the standardized word would vary somewhat in the various languages, depending upon present pronunciations; that is, whether palatalized, and whether or not the language employs a thick i sound (y).

While it is desirable to have phonetic spellings, and while the foregoing variations in spellings would not necessarily be objectionable, it seems that when standardizing a very common word of this kind, it should be satisfactory to carry the standardization still further, even if some phonetic precision would be lost. If this word were written *oni* (or *ony*) always, such practice could hardly be objectionable, regardless of the fact that its pronunciation would vary and the markings for soft pronunciations would be missing.

The foregoing standardization, it should be noted, is intended to pertain only to the grammatical inflexions of the word. When a different word exists, as for example, *vony* (they) in Ukrainian,

and also in Czech vernacular, such a word could be considered as a desirable addition, or variation, in the vocabulary of the Slav group of languages. Standardizing spellings and grammatical inflexions, in other words, does not necessarily mean any pertinent reduction in vocabularies.

Slav languages employ forms of the verb *to be* for the compound tenses, although the extent to which this is done is not the same in these languages. Very complete compound conjugations are found in the Southern Slav group; they tend to be less complete in the Western Slav group; and are used the least in the Eastern group. In fact, in Russian, the verb *to be* is generally omitted in the present tense, which bad habit causes Russian sentences to sound, frequently, like abbreviated newspaper headlines.

The following Slovene examples of conjugations, in the present orthography, will no doubt be clear to all Slav language speakers, due to their concise and simple words, even in the case of the interesting example of the dual number. The dual number is one of those things which Aryan languages usually discontinue as they become modernized, but it still survives in Slovene and Sorbian, and there are traces of it in Serbo-Croat.

*Present Tense*

Singular	{	jaz sem (I am)
		ti si (you are)
		on-ona-ono je (he—she—it is)
Plural	{	mi smo (we are)
		vi ste (you are)
		oni—one—ona so (they are)
Dual (Masculine)	{	midva sva (we two are)
		vidva sta (you two are)
		onadva sta (they two are)
Dual (Feminine and Neuter)	{	midve sva (we two are)
		vidve sta (you two are)
		onedve sta (they two are)



### *Past and Perfect Tense*

Singular	{	jaz sem bil	(I was, I have been)
		ti si bil	(you were, you have been)
		on je bil	(he was, he has been)
		ona je bila	(she was, she has been)
		ono je bilo	(It was, it has been)

Etc.

Besides expediting the standardization of spellings, and to some extent also of grammars, the adoption of a standardized Slav alphabet would, also, facilitate the publishing of combined dictionaries, parallel dictionaries, and combined synonym books.

By using a common alphabet it would be possible to combine the vocabularies of two or more similar languages, such as Czech and Slovak, Serb and Croat, or the Russian group, in one dictionary; in which the explanations or elucidations of meanings would be given in only one of the languages involved, and that, of course, would be the language spoken by the greatest number of people in the group. Due to the similarity of the languages, such a dictionary would be usable by all people in the group, without preparatory instruction; and, obviously, it would afford opportunities for interchanges of words between the languages tending toward assimilation and development into one richer and better language.

Parallel dictionaries would be similar to the foregoing, except that more than one very similar group would be covered, so that explanations or elucidations would be given in more than one language. In this respect, they would be similar to parallel dictionaries that have already been published, frequently covering languages that are very dissimilar. The similarity of Slav languages, and the use of a standard orthography, would undoubtedly afford an opportunity for considerable development of books of this kind.

A combined Slavic synonym book could be a book similar to usual synonym books with the added feature of employing some

signs, abbreviations, or some other suitable devices, for identifying the various languages, or dialects, to which the various words belong. It would seem that it should be possible to develop such a synonym book so it would cover the entire group of Slav languages, and be a very practical and useful book.

To a great extent, the proposed system is similar to the alphabets of Slav countries now using Latin characters; and introducing the new system would not involve any serious difficulties insofar as re-education of the public in these nations is concerned. With regard to those countries now using the Cyrillic characters, it may be pointed out, that in the latter system the italic characters often differ radically from the regular style. For example, a Cyrillic italic *t* is more suggestive of a regular Cyrillic *m* rather than of a *t*; and an italic *i* is very different from the regular *i*. Thus, in these countries, three distinct types or sets of characters actually must be learned by the public, namely: the regular, the italic, and the longhand. Changing to the Latin system, where the regular (or Roman) and the italic characters are more or less similar, would greatly simplify the situation.

In fact, the advantages of a standardized Slav alphabet, using Latin characters, are so great from various viewpoints, that a sufficiently flexible system of the kind proposed here should be adopted as soon as possible, by those Slav countries now using the Cyrillic system; and, simultaneously, also by the Slav nations now using the present non-standard Latin systems.

Failure to proceed along the foregoing lines can only lead eventually to a gradual denationalization of millions of Slavs in Central Europe, with a resultant weakening of the position in the world of all remaining Slav nations. Past history has clearly demonstrated that the small Slav groups in Central Europe cannot exist when antagonized and sub-divided into independent States, except for comparatively brief periods, such as the recent one following the Versailles Treaty, which is now drawing to a close amid great world-wide chaos.

External non-Slavic influences should not be blamed entirely for the present situation, because the weaknesses in the Slav

peoples' organization, or more exactly, their lack of it, afforded the opportunities for these upheavals to take place under the instigation of certain non-Slavic interests, and to the great advantage of these latter interests. The only possible satisfactory solutions that can be attained, to insure appropriate degrees of "self-determination" for the Slav people, and to achieve the proper degree of political stability in Central Europe, must originate from, or be founded upon, cultural consolidations of these Slav nations.

With regard to the pronounced aversion of Slavonic leaders to foster Pan-Slav projects, it might be pointed out that even so progressive and liberal minded a Slav leader as Masaryk, expressed doubts, in his writings, in respect to the desirability and significance of such movements in general. By so doing, like all other Slav leaders, he was neglecting the very thing that affords the only means toward a peaceful and satisfactory consolidation of Slav people.

Originally, a "nation" was a group of tribes of people, speaking either the same language, or a group of very similar dialects which every one in the nation could understand. To this day, that remains the most desirable and fundamental prerequisite for a "nation." A nation should have one, and only one, State and cultural language—nothing else can satisfactorily replace that. When people speaking more than one language are grouped together into one State, the result is either an imperialistic type of State, having a superior or ruling race, and one or more inferior or subject races in it; or else, it is just a loose confederation or alliance that is ready to fall apart at any moment.

Most of the proposed "Confederations of Europe," or "United States of Europe," would have the latter defect, and would be exceedingly impractical. The example of Switzerland, which some point to, is not such a very good example of a consolidated nation. After centuries of association, the three nationalities in Switzerland (German, Italian and French) are just as separate, culturally, as at the beginning; and could become antagonistic to each other any time that that would bring some real benefit to any one of the groups. Special circumstances and con-

ditions have helped to hold the State together, but that is no indication that the same arrangement can be relied upon anywhere else.

This does not mean that cooperation of people or nations, speaking different languages, is to be considered totally impossible; for definitely it is not that, and it is very desirable to have such cooperations practiced to the fullest extent that is possible. But, on the other hand, we must recognize that real consolidations of people, speaking very similar languages or dialects, into real nations, are actually possible and practical, if carried out with the help of a standardized alphabet as proposed in the foregoing discussion; whereas, similar consolidation of the more heterogeneous large groups of people, probably are more or less impossible. Therefore, confederations of Slav nations, especially of Slav nations speaking the most similar languages, are far more important than any other types of confederations in Europe at the present time.

In this connection, it is of interest to note that the exiled governments of Poland and Czechoslovakia have entered into an agreement creating a confederation between the proposed states of these nations after the present war. Very much could be expected of such a confederation,—if it involved, also, the adoption of a language plan and the foregoing standard Slav alphabet; because, in that case, the confederation would have the means whereby it could slowly develop into one united nation. It is to be hoped that a similar confederation can sometime be arranged (also with a language plan and the use of the standard Slav alphabet) between the future Yugoslav and Bulgarian countries—and that the Soviet Union will cooperate in this consolidation of Slav culture by also adopting this standard Slav alphabet.







